AMERICAN CENTURY SERIES $1.95

Wendell Phillips ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM ★

Edited by LOUIS FILLER

When the pulpit preached slave hunting, and the law bound the victim, and society said, "Amen! this will make money," we were "fanatics," "enthusiasts," "seditious," "disorganizers," "scorners of the pulpit," "traitors." Genius of the past! drop not from thy tablets one of these honorable names. We claim them all as our surest title deeds to the memory and gratitude of mankind.

Liberty, even in defeat, knows nothing but victory.

WENDELL PHILLIPS
on Civil Rights and Freedom

EDITED BY LOUIS FILLER

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Prelude: An Anti-Slavery Meeting
(January 24, 1861)

Mr. Phillips stood on the front of the platform for a full hour, trying to be heard whenever the storm lulled a little. They cried, "Throw him out!" "Throw a brick-bat at him!" "Your house is a-fire: don't you know your house is a-fire? Go put out your house." Then they'd sing, with various bellowing and shrieking accompaniments, "Tell [Gov.] John Andrew, tell John Andrew, tell John Andrew, John Brown's dead!" I should think there were four or five hundred of them. At one time they all rose up, many of them clattered down-stairs, and there was a surging forward toward the platform. My heart beat so fast I could hear it; for I did not then know how Mr. Phillips's armed friends were stationed at every door, and in the middle of every aisle. They formed a firm wall which the mob could not pass. At last it was announced that the police were coming. I saw and heard nothing of them, but there was a lull. Mr. Phillips tried to speak, but his voice was again drowned. Then, by a clever stroke of management, he stooped forward, and addressed his speech to the reporters directly below him. This tantalized the mob; and they began to call out, "Speak louder! we want to hear what you're saying"; whereupon he raised his voice, and for half an hour he seemed to hold them in the hollow of his hand. But, as soon as he sat down, they began to yell and sing again, to prevent any more speaking. . . . R. W. Emerson tried to address the people; but his voice was completely drowned. . . .

In the afternoon meeting the uproar was greater than it had been in the forenoon. The mob cheered and hurrahed for the Union, and for Edward Everett, and for Mayor Wightman, and for Charles Francis Adams. The mayor came at last, and mounting the platform, informed his "fellow-citizens" in the galleries, that the trustees of the building had requested him to disperse the meeting and close the hall. Turning the meeting out-of-doors was precisely what they wanted him to do.

Letters of Lydia Maria Child (1880)

Introduction: Wendell Phillips and the Necessity for Radicalism

I loved my Country so as only they
Who love a mother fit to die for may;
I loved her old renown, her stainless fame,—
What better proof than that I loathed her shame?

James Russell Lowell,
"An Epistle to George William Curtis"

I

THOSE WHO BELIEVE that culture and life are interrelated will have ultimately to face the fact that recently they have not been, that Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman, for example, have close to no influence upon embattled civil rights workers, who imagine these literary titans to have been well intentioned, no doubt, but simply obtuse to the dilemmas created by atomic fission, atheism, the loosening of sexual sanctions, and the reality of the communist society. A student tells me that Henry Miller is playing the role Whitman played in his own time, but this interesting hypothesis is not substantiated in literature classes. There the student parrots the polite phrases about Transcendentalist idealism in exchange for good grades, before returning to the real world of sordid language and experience. I am sure that my colleagues mean well, and hope that our expanded institutions will be no drab conveyor belts for cultural equivalents of Vietnam, but we will never stabilize our efforts to build sound studies while we permit their foundations to rot or be undermined.

Emerson and Thoreau were *radicals,* and were so perceived in their own time. Whitman is still unknown, and still subject to the responses he provoked in his contemporaries: as having written formlessly, as having written too much, as having been merely openhearted and naïve. A handful of scholars know this is all false, and that there are some matters involving Whitman which we will never fully know, because of his long and practiced efforts to preserve his privacy. But for those among us who would like to bring our culture to bear upon our problems, there is every-

thing yet to be done. A little, apparently, can be accomplished by pretending to admire Lincoln as a radical, though the opposition stands on firmer ground in claiming him as a conservative. It probably gains more in the long run because people usually only commit themselves a very short way in sustaining fictions. But a long-term social-cultural enterprise demands more. It cannot rest securely on the pretense that the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States did that, and *that* Amendment was accepted by the South, as well as the North. It was the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments on which the South gagged. Yet, in a certain sense, the Emancipation Proclamation was vital to the course of events which led to the Thirteenth Amendment. The point is that without understanding the *details* which give the Emancipation Proclamation vitality, and Abraham Lincoln his legitimate place beside William Lloyd Garrison, one cannot understand the dynamics which permeated the American society of their time, which the antislavery partisans proper so vibrantly affected. Without *details,* one cannot understand the difference between Lincoln and Garrison, or between Lyndon B. Johnson and James Farmer. He cannot build on that understanding.

When we begin to appreciate the impact of our culture on our lives, for better or worse, and have begun to understand that our cultural past is no mere snack preceding the solid menu of folk songs and Italian films which support our appeal to the American public's conscience, we will find Wendell Phillips soundly beside Emerson and the other worthies whom we theoretically claim.* Phillips was so seen during the nineteenth century. Like Emerson, he did not write formal essays, but simply collected and edited his speeches for the reading public. Like Emerson, he was the author of famous speeches; his most popular, "The Lost Arts," having been delivered some two thousand times before varied audiences. He was generally recognized to be a living classic, even by people who found his messages most unpalatable, but who swallowed them for the grace and eloquence, the wit

* I emphasize Emerson because he, too, was a noted lecturer. But Thoreau is equally important to our perspective on Phillips, especially in connection with John Brown and disunion sentiments; see pp. 95, 114-115.

and learning which went along with them. Even the Richmond (Virginia) *Enquirer,* which deemed his doctrines abominable, termed him "an infernal machine set to music." The point is that our would-be civil libertarians of the present day who pretend to appreciate Emerson have no sense of the utter vitality which fills Phillips's fighting demands for civil liberties and freedom. This is as it should be, for it would be absurd to claim Phillips as a partner without also drawing from the *living* marrow of Emerson's writings. A great civil rights movement will bring to the fore great men who can do more than quote Emerson: who can create their own memorable quotations for a new time. But first they must implement themselves with the past. Briefly, Emerson's role was to speak for the freedom of the individual; Phillips emphasized the society in which the individual necessarily moved. Both of these champions mixed idealism with hard Yankee logic and experience. Emerson was far from naïve. He had not left his Unitarian pulpit in order to dally with a shallow optimism. No one can read his *Journal* for any length of time without noticing that Emerson's was an acute mind determined to create a real and living world. His optimism was hard come by, and it was calculated to survive confusion and disappointment.

We need to recapture the truth that a shallow pessimism is no deeper, no truer than a shallow optimism. When we have relearned this we will once again find Emerson an adventure and Wendell Phillips's work part of our cultural inheritance. But even before then, we need his work, because of its patent relationship to our own.

II

Now, as then, our society was overshadowed by a Negro problem, and ridden by interests and prejudices which resisted its human and necessary solution. Now, as then, its solution was complicated by other problems, economic, social, sectional, which interfered with the development of a direct approach to the slavery problem. White workers feared the effects on their living standards of an unleashed slave population. Social customs and family expectations everywhere raised great bugaboos of inter-

marriage. The North, like the South, turned down the easiest, fairest solution to the problem: the national *purchase* from the slaveholders of their Negro property with funds derived from the sale of Federal lands in the West. (This would have raised the price of Western lands and was unappetizing to would-be settlers.)

Such fears and prejudices, among many others, excited the creation of complex political alliances. The followers of Andrew Jackson in the North spoke for Free Soil, but rarely for civil rights. Jackson's Administration was sympathetic to Southern fears for its slave system and more than willing to suppress antislavery elements as necessary. Although some antislavery partisans adhered to Jackson's party, they found themselves effectively silenced within it. The Whigs divided into Cotton Whigs and Conscience Whigs, but even those of greatest conscience north of Mason-Dixon were torn between their moral feelings and their political duties.

So the nation dreamed on, consoled by the hope of gradual improvement of conditions for the Negroes. Who could break the enchantment of pious self-righteousness? There were, indeed, solid citizens in every avenue of American philanthropy and reform, and these merit courtesy and respect from us. A civilization which cannot use its parks at night—and ours is such a civilization—cannot afford to be critical of anybody. Nevertheless, the Negro question weighed heavily on the American spirit, aggravated by the increasing number of Negro slaves, the increasing intercourse of North and South by way of improved roads, canals, and other developments.

Then Garrison uttered the phrase "immediate emancipation." It was as though someone had cried *Fire!* in a building which carried the heat and odor of burning wood, but where a compact kept people working and avoiding discussion of the subject. Garrison was a lone and insignificant personage. Yet Wendell Phillips was correct to have observed that Garrison's had been a monumental insight and courage to have challenged the unwritten agreements of respectability, and to have given a slogan to dissidents.

Phillips became the most distinguished of Garrison's followers, but it needs to be underscored that Phillips was his own man and

had his own program. He and Garrison far from agreed on everything. But of course they agreed on the necessity for settling the issue of slavery. And they agreed on the social need for free speech, free debate, a true community decision, and the right to dissent from it. For them, it was no more important to be a Whig voter than a Democratic voter. What was important was that they be faithful to principles, at whatever cost. They were radical because they were concerned for roots; and, in that generation, there seemed to them no more basic cause than that which united freedom and free speech. Antislavery became the most crucial of their causes, but it helped develop, in addition, such others as women's rights and peace.

Phillips brought to his crusade many assets and credentials. His family was among the first families in Massachusetts, with a long record of public service behind it. His own father had been Boston's first mayor, and against him Phillips proudly, if unconsciously, measured his successors. Phillips was splendidly endowed with height, grace, a rich voice, and a fine mind. He had gained much from his education. He stood unshakably on all of New England's traditions, defying his most hostile audiences to prove themselves more true, in law or tradition, than himself. He confronted them with his Harvard and law training and his experience and subdued them by force of courage and superior resources. And he marshaled from his lifelong reading and thought a host of witnesses out of the past to dignify his tenets and arguments.

In order to do this, he shattered forensic standards and changed the nature of American oratory. Before Phillips, debate and oratory had consisted of an artificial set of standards and conventions, involving learned references, formal attention to correct gestures and intonations, clichés endorsed by gentlemen and scholars.* Even Daniel Webster, for all his learning and sense of

* As Thomas Wentworth Higginson put it: "The keynote to the oratory of Wendell Phillips lay in this: that it was essentially conversational—the conversational raised to its highest power. Perhaps no orator ever spoke with so little apparent effort or began so entirely on the plane of his average hearers. It was as if he simply repeated, in a little louder tone, what he had just been saying to some familiar friend at his elbow. The effect was absolutely disarming. Those accustomed to spread-eagle eloquence felt, perhaps, a slight

the national tradition, was grand rather than creative, a monument rather than a leader. Then there was that shining light of American oratory, Edward Everett, whom his countrymen showered with honors. He was a Harvard professor and later its president, he was a Congressman, a governor, Minister to the Court of St. James, and a Secretary of State. It was Everett who would deliver the major address at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863, when President Lincoln also offered a few remarks. Phillips never permitted Everett to rest secure in his fame. Phillips's own methods directly opposed those of this distinguished "doughface": this Northerner with Southern principles. Phillips wasted no time on intellectual frippery. He scorned learning which lacked point. He could mock and joke. He could improvise entire speeches. Most striking from the cultural point of view was his unassuming manner, his use of American references and American illustrations. Phillips was quite conscious of what he was about, as in his speech on the "Philosophy of the Abolition Movement," where he observed that the antislavery debate

> has been one of the noblest contributions to a literature really American. Heretofore, not only has our tone been but an echo of foreign culture, but the very topics discussed and the views maintained have been too often pale reflections of European politics and European philosophy. No matter what dress we assumed, the voice was ever "the voice of Jacob."

Above all, Phillips had no time for evasions. Even his less polemical lectures turned light on principles and social circumstances. And when he turned to national affairs his words were a call to action, directed at the audience and not at some remote occasion. No wonder many a forum which invited him to speak hastened to designate the topic on which he might discourse. No wonder "The Lost Arts" was specified over and over again. Thus, his timid hosts believed, they could be entertained by Phillips's

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sense of disappointment. Could this easy, effortless man be Wendell Phillips? But he held them by his very quietness; it did not seem to have occurred to him to doubt his power to hold them. . . . Then, as the argument went on, the voice grew deeper, the action more animated, and the sentences came in a long, sonorous swell, still easy and graceful, but powerful as the soft stretching of a tiger's paw."

talents and presence while they avoided the sting of his abolitionist contentions. Their forethought did not always save them from his wit. He could turn apparently innocent subjects into byways where lurked aspects of the slavery question, as in his lecture on "Street Life in Europe," which he delivered following his long visit abroad in 1839-1841.

III

It will be noted that it was rarely Phillips's *facts* which were in question, but his attitude. It was held that he ought to be more understanding of the slaveholders' dilemma, more tolerant of the views of his Northern neighbors. Phillips's idea was that they ought to be more tolerant of his own, at the very least. Beyond that, it was their duty to honor truth and to act in accordance with it. As he said, in that same major address on the philosophy of abolitionism:

> What is the denunciation with which we are charged? It is endeavoring, in our faltering human speech, to declare the enormity of the sin of making merchandise of man—of separating husband and wife, taking the infant from the mother, and selling the daughter to prostitution—of a professedly Christian nation denying, by statute, the Bible to every sixth man and woman of its population, and making it illegal for "two or three" to meet together, except a white man be present! What is this harsh criticism of motives with which we are charged? It is simply holding the intelligent and deliberate actor responsible for the character and consequences of his acts. Is there anything inherently wrong in such denunciation or such criticism? This we may claim—we have never judged a man but out of his own mouth. We have seldom, if ever, held him to account, except for acts of which he and his own friends were proud. All that we ask the world and thoughtful men to note are the principles and deeds on which the American pulpit and American public men plume themselves. We always allow our opponents to paint their own picture. Our humble duty is to stand by and assure the spectators that what they would take for a knave and a hypocrite is really, in American estimation, a Doctor of Divinity or Secretary of State.

Thus Phillips, thus the abolitionists. They were many and varied, and had careers which took them into every conceivable

corner of American life.* Many of them require analysis that can bring closer to us the thoughts they pursued and the conclusions they reached. Few of their writings have quite the ready relationship to our present social turmoil that Phillips's writings have. For he held so firmly to an elemental understanding of the meaning of human freedom that a hundred years have scarcely added anything to the problem as he saw it. True, the issue today is no longer *slavery;* and many an abolitionist retired once the Civil War had ended, in the belief that *slavery* had been abolished. Phillips himself was urged to join them in retirement. He refused. He held that the battle had to continue until civil rights had been won. A Phillips who, to the consternation of his friends, went on to hold that *wage slavery* was as colossal an evil as the Negro slavery which had been buried, and who went on in his old age to defend the eight-hour day and the co-operative society and the control of wealthy private interests was an arrow to the future which extends its flight into our very own era.

"Inscribe on your ballot boxes," Phillips urged the workers, " 'HERE WE NEVER FORGIVE'." What would Phillips say today? It is difficult to judge, for times have changed mightily since Negroes were without power at the polls, and workers could expect little from legislators. If Phillips were alive, he could make mistakes. But he would be radical. He would demand the right to speak his mind. With Garrison, he would refuse to equivocate. He would be harsh. He would refuse the blandishments of compromise and gradualism. Today there are those who fear that an uncompromising righteousness on the international front could destroy us all. Perhaps so. But is this also true on the *domestic* front? Or do we stand to gain by whatever tears the veil from connivers and opportunists?

IV

When Phillips died in 1884, it was universally agreed that his like would not be seen again. He became all but a legendary figure whom his several biographers did not bring nearer. We

* For a sense of their variety, see my chapter on "The Antislavery Concert," *The Crusade Against Slavery, 1830-1860* (1960), pp. 48 ff. They include

need his speeches to return him to us: to bring his warmth and many-sidedness to bear upon our lives. They remind us that once there was a highly endowed aristocrat who stepped forward in behalf of his beloved traditions to do battle with forces he saw as threatening to human dignity and hope. His Massachusetts, his Pilgrim Fathers were in jeopardy. He threw away his social opportunities and turned on his elite associates and instead appealed to the common people for support. Their roughness and skepticism did not daunt him; he felt secure in their ultimate good intentions and good sense. He did not try to propitiate them, but exchanged retort for retort until they gave him their reluctant admiration. Their opportunism, their carelessness, their undependability did not drive him to drink; they drove him to temperance! He survived their frantic aimlessness, and lived to see them fight for a Federal Government he could endorse and defend. He died certain that the people who had won the War for Independence and the War for the Union would meet other dark days with the same courage and success.

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numerous figures unwarrantedly unknown, some of whom are yet to be given due place in literature as in history courses. Thus, John Greenleaf Whittier, despite a hundred years of fame, is still inadequately estimated as an abolitionist figure, as well as a literary figure.

Prefatory Note

THE FOLLOWING selections have been chosen by way of an introduction to Wendell Phillips, for their eloquence, for a sense of their relations to society, and their relevance to our own era. They have been drawn from two collections: his *Speeches, Lectures, and Letters,* put together by James Redpath and first issued in 1864; and *Speeches, Lectures, and Letters,* Volume II, edited by Theodore C. Pease in 1891. These by no means exhaust the canon of Phillips's works, but they suffice for the present. We are yet to perceive the full possibilities of the "usable past," and when we do, we will find Phillips active and alive in it. I have edited the following writings freely, modernizing spelling and punctuations, without, of course, taking liberties with his formulations proper. Titles have been revised for greater clarification of the essay's content, some passages have been omitted which diverted attention from the flow of argument by contemporary or other reference. A few such passages have been retained for tone. Writings have been largely put in chronological sequence, to help our sense of the development of issues in Phillips's time. Some notes have been added to identify significant individuals, but there has seemed no present gain in identifying everybody. I have had the odd experience of having scholars complain that I am too concerned with "obscure" personages—obscure, that is, to them. We must learn to take an age on its own terms before we presume to impose hypotheses upon it. In any event, the emphasis here has been, first and last, on eloquence—eloquence as distinguished from rhetoric. Phillips's contemporaries understood the difference.

L. F.

Some Thoughts and Deeds of Wendell Phillips

Agitation

Some people's idea of agitation is like the clown in the classic play, two thousand years ago, who seeing a man bring down with an arrow an eagle floating in the blue ether above, said: "You needn't have wasted that arrow—the fall would have killed him!"

The Rat in the Statue

Hung Fung was a Chinese philosopher well-nigh a hundred years old. The Emperor once said to him: "Hung, ninety years of study and observation must have made you wise. Tell me, what is the great danger of a government?"

"Well," quoth Hung, "it's the rat in the statue."

"The rat in the statue!" repeated the Emperor. "What do you mean?"

"Why," retorted Hung, "you know we build statues to the memory of our ancestors. They are made of wood, and are hollow and painted. Now, if a rat gets into one you can't smoke it out—it's the image of your father. You can't plunge it into the water—that would wash off the paint. So the rat is safe because the image is sacred."

Thoreau on Wendell Phillips

The admission of this gentleman into the Lyceum has been strenuously opposed by a respectable portion of our fellow-citizens, . . . and in each instance the people have voted that they *would hear him*. . . . We would fain express our appreciation of the freedom and steady wisdom, so rare in the reformer, with which he declared that he was not born to abolish slavery, but to do right. . . . It is so rare and encouraging to listen to an orator who is content with another alliance than with the popular party. . . . We consider Mr. Phillips one of the most conspicuous and efficient champions of the true Church and State

now in the field, and would say to him, and such as are like him, "God speed you."

"Wendell Phillips before the Concord Lyceum" (1845)

Massachusetts

The five points of Massachusetts decency were, to trace your lineage to the *Mayflower,* graduate at Harvard College, be a good lawyer or a member of an orthodox church—either would answer —pay your debts, and frighten your child to sleep by saying "Thomas Jefferson."

Statesmen and Monkeys

Lucian tells us of an exhibition in Rome in which monkeys had been trained to take part in a play. They played their parts perfectly, for a while, before an audience composed of the beauty and fashion of the city, but in the midst of the performance some Roman wag flung upon the stage a handful of nuts, and immediately the actors were monkeys again. Our statesmen went to Washington monkeys in human attire.

North and South

There have never been any friends of the Southerner in the Northern States but the abolitionists. The Democrats deluded him; the Whigs cheated him; the abolitionists stood on his border and said: "It is in vain for you to fight against the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler. You are endeavoring to sustain a system that repudiates the laws of God and the spirit of the nineteenth century; put it away, or you will make blood and bankruptcy your guests." But the maddened South closed its eyes and rushed on to destruction. Now we say, "Come into line with the age, found your economy on righteousness, and then spindles will make vocal every stream and fill every valley."

What is Austria? Who is Haynau? The culminating star of Austrian atrocity—the general whose name recalls everything that is most monstrous in Austria's treatment of downtrodden

Hungary. Haynau! What was it that the European press charged upon him as his greatest atrocity? Why, he whipped one woman, a countess; he whipped one woman at the public whipping post. . . . That is Haynau; but he followed the example of half the States of this Union. There, woman-whipping is the law and custom of the land. There are a hundred thousand men and women in this nation who have a right by law to whip a million and a half of women in fifteen of the Southern States. "One murder makes a villain; millions a hero."

By the North I mean the civilization of the nineteenth century. . . . I mean free speech, free types, open Bibles, the welcome rule of the majority—I mean the Declaration of Independence! And by the South, I mean likewise a principle, and not a locality. . . . I mean the aristocracy of the skin, which considers the Declaration of Independence a sham, and democracy a snare—which believes that one third of the race is born booted and spurred, and the other two thirds ready saddled for that third to ride.

Ideas

George Canning prophesied when he said, "The next war that passes over Europe is to be a war of ideas." Now, wherever there is the war of ideas, every tongue takes a side. There is no neutrality. Even silence is not neutrality; but he who speaks a word of sympathy to his brother man is on the side of humanity and progress.

Conciliation

I am for conciliation, but not for conciliating the slaveholder. Death to the system, and death or exile to the master, is the only motto.

Phillips and the Minister

In the old antislavery days I lectured in Cincinnati. At the same time there was a convention of ministers in session. The

next morning I took the cars. . . . Presently, a sleek, well-fed man bustled onto the platform, and addressing the brakeman, asked: "Is Mr. Phillips on board?" "Yes," was the reply, "there he sits back of the door." The man came into the car—he was evidently a clergyman. In a loud voice he cried, pointing his finger at me:

"Are you Mr. Phillips?"

"I am, sir."

"Are you trying to free the niggers?"

"Yes, sir, I am an abolitionist."

"Well, why do you preach your doctrines up here? Why don't you go there?" pointing toward Kentucky, just across the Ohio River.

"Excuse me," said I, "are you a preacher?"

"I am, sir."

"Are you trying to save souls from hell?"

"Yes, sir, there is my business."

"Well, why don't you go there?"

Politics

I risk nothing when I say, that the antislavery discussion of the last twenty years has been the salt of this nation: it has actually kept it alive and wholesome. Without it our politics would have sunk beyond even contempt.

Frederick Douglass on Phillips

On one occasion . . . , after delivering a lecture to the New Bedford Lyceum before a highly cultivated audience, when brought to the railroad station (as I was not allowed to travel in a first-class car, but was compelled to ride in a filthy box called the "Jim Crow" car), he stepped to my side in the presence of his aristocratic friends, and walked with me straight into this miserable dog car, saying, "Douglass, if you cannot ride with me, I can ride with you."

"Oration on Wendell Phillips" (1884)

The Negro's Place

I am not asking now for his rights; I am asking for the use of him. I want him for the future. . . . Do you remember that significant telegram of McClellan from Yorktown—and it was only the repetition of a dozen telegrams that preceded it, substantially this: "To the Secretary of War: Sir, we have taken Yorktown; only one single white man in it." He does not think it necessary to say there were some thousands of Negroes. Of course there were. They stayed where liberty was coming, and ideas, and civilization, and men who worked with their hands and their brains, as they themselves did.

"Separation of Races"

Mr. Sumner . . . warns you colored men not "to band together in a hostile camp, and keep alive the separation of races"! The Negro, robbed, tortured, murdered, trodden under foot, defenseless in unresisting submission—who has the heart to charge him with an iota of the guilt of "keeping alive the separation of races"? Surely this lamb has never shown any hate, or any undue prejudice, against the wolf.

Colonization

Colonize the blacks! A man might as well colonize his hands; or when the robber enters his house, he might as well colonize his revolver. . . . We need the blacks even more than they need us. They know every inlet, the pathway of every wood, the whole country is mapped at night in their instinct. And they are inevitably on our side, ready as well as skilled to aid: the only element the South has which belongs to the nineteenth century. Aside from justice, the Union needs the blacks.

Slaves and Negroes

Will the *slave* fight? Well, if any man asks you, tell him no. Will he work? Well, if any man asks you, tell him no. But if he

asks you whether the *Negro* will fight, tell him yes. If he asks you whether the Negro will work, tell him yes.

Women

We have planted woman in a flowerpot, hemmed her in by restrictions; and, when we move to enlarge her sphere, society cries out, "Oh, you'll break the flowerpot!" Well, I say, let it break. Man made it; and, the sooner it goes to pieces, the better. Let us see how broadly the branches will throw themselves, and how beautiful will be the shape, and how glorious against the moonlit sky, or glowing sunset, the foliage shall appear!

I do not want to ignore the power of woman; it is too great. I want it lessened. I am not going to give the sex any more influence; I am going to diminish it. Her influence is hidden and all but omnipotent. Uneducated and irresponsible, it is terrible. I want it dragged to the light of day; I want it measured and labeled; I want it counted and criticized; I want it educated and put on record; I want to be able to find it and indict it, which I cannot do today.

What do we toil for? Why, my friends, I do not much care whether a woman actually goes to the ballot box and votes—that is a slight matter. . . . Some of you were saying today, in these very seats—coming here out of mere curiosity, to see what certain fanatics could find to say—"Why, I don't want any more rights; I have rights enough." . . . Nobody doubted it, Madam! But the question is not of you; the question is of some houseless wife of a drunkard; the question is of some ground-down daughter of toil. . . . The question is not of you, it is of some friendless woman of twenty, standing at the door of the world, educated, capable, desirous of serving her time and her race, and saying, "Where shall I use these talents? How shall I earn bread?" And Orthodox society, cabined and cribbed in St. Paul, cries out, "Go sew, jade! We have no other channel for you. Go to the needle, or wear yourself to death as a schoolmistress."

Democracy

I never said that a democracy was a *good* government. A thing may be the *best* we can get, and yet not be *good.* Democracy . . . is the best we can get while we have only this poor, rotten human nature to work with.

Lying Evasions

Mr. [Benjamin R.] Curtis defended the right of Massachusetts to surrender the fugitive slave, on the ground that every sovereign State had authority to exclude foreigners from its soil. "Exclude foreigners from the soil"! How delicate a phrase! What a "commodity of good names" this trouble of ours has coined! "Service and labor" was the Constitutional veil to hide the ugly face of slavery. Then, "Peculiar Institution"! "Patriarchal Institution"!! "Domestic Institution"!!! And now, "excluding foreigners from our soil"!!!!

Free Speech

The community that will not protect its most ignorant and unpopular member in the free utterance of his opinions, no matter how false or hateful, is only a gang of slaves.

Truth and Prejudice

Because you have your prejudices, shall there be no history written? Our task is unlike that of some recent meetings—*history,* not flattery.

WENDELL PHILLIPS
on Civil Rights and Freedom

In Defense of Lovejoy

The abolitionist movement in 1837 had been growing spectacularly since January 1, 1831, when William Lloyd Garrison issued the first number of the Liberator. *He never published more than some five thousand copies per issue of his paper. The Garrisonians were only an idea, but that idea touched the nerves of Southern and the guilty consciences of Northern partisans. Southern defenses of slavery multiplied; Northern antislavery societies proliferated from New England to the Midwestern frontier. Its spokesmen, both men and women, appealed to the moral, economic, social, and political interests of their neighbors in seeking to limit the prerogatives of the slaveholding class. In 1835, fear of the increasing strength and confidence of the antislavery lecturers and editors resulted in a rash of riots in the North (see pp. 10 ff.). Still the organizing and evangelizing activities of antislavery workers went on, if anything augmented by the persecutions they suffered. In St. Louis, Missouri, the Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy pursued his path toward immortality, denouncing slavery and Catholicism, and holding to free speech and the Bill of Rights in refusing to halt his campaign, though it cost him and his supporters three wrecked printing presses and numerous threats of worse. Lovejoy moved with his family to Alton, Illinois, across the Mississippi River. It was there, November 7, 1837, that he died defending his fourth press against a mob with arms in hand. Abolitionism had its first white martyr. Though the great Unitarian, Reverend William Ellery Channing, deplored Lovejoy's use of "carnal weapons," he joined petitioners in Boston, Massachusetts, who requested the use of Faneuil Hall to memorialize the tragedy. They overcame the resistance of the city fathers and convened their meeting, where resolutions were offered denouncing the Alton mob. Present was the attorney general of Massachusetts, James T. Austin, who reprobated Lovejoy, termed him "presumptuous and imprudent," and compared the Alton rioters with those who poured the English tea into Boston*

Harbor in 1773. Wendell Phillips was then a young lawyer, and in the audience with friends. Outraged by the comparison, he rose to respond, giving voice to the most famous such spontaneous utterance since that by Patrick Henry, March 23, 1775, in the Virginia House of Burgesses. It was not Phillips's first public address (see pp. 23 ff.), but it electrified readers far beyond the confines of Faneuil Hall, and sounded the keynote for all his future eloquence.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have met for the freest discussion of these resolutions, and the events which gave rise to them. [Cries of "Question," "Hear him," "Go on," "No gagging."] I hope I shall be permitted to express my surprise at the sentiments of the last speaker, surprise not only at such sentiments from such a man, but at the applause they have received within these walls. A comparison has been drawn between the events of the Revolution and the tragedy at Alton. We have heard it asserted here, in Faneuil Hall, that Great Britain had a right to tax the Colonies, and we have heard the mob at Alton, the drunken murderers of Lovejoy, compared to those patriot fathers who threw the tea overboard! [Great applause.] Fellow citizens, is this Faneuil Hall doctrine? ["No, no."] The mob at Alton were met to wrest from a citizen his just rights, met to resist the laws. We have been told that our fathers did the same; and the glorious mantle of Revolutionary precedent has been thrown over the mobs of our day. To make out their title to such defense, the gentleman says that the British Parliament had a *right* to tax these Colonies. It is manifest that, without this, his parallel falls to the ground; for Lovejoy had stationed himself within constitutional bulwarks. He was not only defending the freedom of the press, but he was under his own roof, in arms with the sanction of the civil authority. The men who assailed him went against and over the laws. The *mob,* as the gentleman terms it—mob, forsooth! certainly we sons of the tea spillers are a marvelously patient generation!—the "orderly mob" which assembled in the Old South to destroy the tea were met to resist, not the laws, but illegal exactions. Shame on the American who calls the tea tax and stamp act *laws!* Our

fathers resisted, not the King's prerogative, but the King's usurpation. To find any other account, you must read our Revolutionary history upside down. Our State archives are loaded with arguments of John Adams to prove the taxes laid by the British Parliament unconstitutional, beyond its power. It was not till this was made out that the men of New England rushed to arms. The arguments of the Council Chamber and the House of Representatives preceded and sanctioned the contest. To draw the conduct of our ancestors into a precedent for mobs, for a right to resist laws we ourselves have enacted, is an insult to their memory. The difference between the excitements of those days and our own, which the gentleman in kindness to the latter has overlooked, is simply this: the men of that day went for the right, as secured by the laws. They were the people rising to sustain the laws and constitution of the Province. The rioters of our day go for their own wills, right or wrong. Sir, when I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips [pointing to the portraits in the Hall] would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead. [Great applause and counterapplause.] The gentleman said that he should sink into insignificance if he dared to gainsay the principles of these resolutions. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up.

[Applause and hisses, with cries of "Take that back." The uproar became so great that for a long time no one could be heard. At length G. Bond, Esq., and Hon. W. Sturgis came to Mr. Phillips's side at the front of the platform. They were met with cries of "Phillips or nobody," "Make him take back 'recreant,'" "He shan't go on till he takes it back." When it was understood they meant to sustain, not to interrupt, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Sturgis was listened to, and said: "I did not come here to take any part in this discussion, nor do I intend to; but I do entreat you, fellow citizens, by everything you hold sacred—I conjure you by every association connected with this Hall, consecrated by our fathers to freedom of discussion—that you listen to every man who addresses you in a decorous manner." Mr. Phillips resumed.]

Fellow citizens, I cannot take back my words. Surely the Attorney General, so long and well known here, needs not the aid of your hisses against one so young as I am—my voice never before heard within these walls!

Another ground has been taken to excuse the mob, and throw doubt and discredit on the conduct of Lovejoy and his associates. Allusion has been made to what lawyers understand very well, the "conflict of laws." We are told that nothing but the Mississippi River rolls between St. Louis and Alton; and the conflict of laws somehow or other gives the citizens of the former a right to find fault with the defender of the press for publishing his opinions so near their limits. Will the gentleman venture that argument before lawyers? How the laws of the two States could be said to come into conflict in such circumstances I question whether any lawyer in this audience can explain or understand. No matter whether the line that divides one sovereign State from another be an imaginary one or ocean-wide, the moment you cross it the State you leave is blotted out of existence, so far as you are concerned. The czar might as well claim to control the deliberations of Faneuil Hall, as the laws of Missouri demand reverence, or the shadow of obedience, from an inhabitant of Illinois.

I must find some fault with the statement which has been made of the events at Alton. It has been asked why Lovejoy and his friends did not appeal to the executive—trust their defense to the police of the city. It has been hinted that, from hasty and ill-judged excitement, the men within the building provoked a quarrel, and that he fell in the course of it, one mob resisting another. Recollect, Sir, that they did act with the approbation and sanction of the Mayor. In strict truth, there was no executive to appeal to for protection. The Mayor acknowledged that he could not protect them. They asked him if it was lawful for them to defend themselves. He told them it was, and sanctioned their assembling in arms to do so. They were not, then, a mob; they were not merely citizens defending their own property; they were in some sense the *posse comitatus,* adopted for the occasion into the police of the city, acting under the order of a magistrate. It was civil authority resisting lawless violence. Where, then, was the imprudence? Is the doctrine to be sustained here, that it is

imprudent for men to aid magistrates in executing the laws?

Men are continually asking each other, Had Lovejoy a right to resist? Sir, I protest against the question, instead of answering it. Lovejoy did not resist, in the sense they mean. He did not throw himself back on the natural right of self-defense. He did not cry anarchy, and let slip the dogs of civil war, careless of the horrors which would follow.

Sir, as I understand this affair, it was not an individual protecting his property; it was not one body of armed men resisting another, and making the streets of a peaceful city run blood with their contentions. It did not bring back the scenes in some old Italian cities, where family met family, and faction met faction, and mutually trampled the laws under foot. No; the men in that house were regularly *enrolled,* under the sanction of the Mayor. There being no militia in Alton, about seventy men were enrolled with the approbation of the Mayor. These relieved each other every other night. About thirty men were in arms on the night of the sixth, when the press was landed. The next evening, it was not thought necessary to summon more than half that number; among these was Lovejoy. It was, therefore, you perceive, Sir, the police of the city resisting rioters—civil government breasting itself to the shock of lawless men.

Here is no question about the right of self-defense. It is in fact simply this: Has the civil magistrate a right to put down a riot?

Some persons seem to imagine that anarchy existed at Alton from the commencement of these disputes. Not at all. "No one of us," says an eyewitness and a comrade of Lovejoy, "has taken up arms during these disturbances but at the command of the Mayor." Anarchy did not settle down on that devoted city till Lovejoy breathed his last. Till then the law, represented in his person, sustained itself against its foes. When he fell, civil authority was trampled under foot. He had "planted himself on his constitutional rights," appealed to the laws, claimed the protection of the civil authority, taken refuge under "the broad shield of the Constitution. When through that he was pierced and fell, he fell but one sufferer in a common catastrophe." He took refuge under the banner of liberty, amid its folds; and when

he fell, its glorious stars and stripes, the emblem of free institutions, around which cluster so many heart-stirring memories, were blotted out in the martyr's blood.

It has been stated, perhaps inadvertently, that Lovejoy or his comrades fired first. This is denied by those who have the best means of knowing. Guns were first fired by the mob. After being twice fired on, those within the building consulted together and deliberately returned the fire. But suppose they did fire first. They had a right so to do; not only the right which every citizen has to defend himself, but the further right which every civil officer has to resist violence. Even if Lovejoy fired the first gun, it would not lessen his claim to our sympathy, or destroy his title to be considered a martyr in defense of a free press. The question now is, Did he act within the Constitution and the laws? The men who fell in State Street on the 5th of March, 1770, did more than Lovejoy is charged with. They were the *first* assailants. Upon some slight quarrel they pelted the troops with every missile within reach. Did this bate one jot of the eulogy with which Hancock and Warren hallowed their memory, hailing them as the first martyrs in the cause of American liberty?

If, Sir, I had adopted what are called Peace principles, I might lament the circumstances of this case. But all you who believe, as I do, in the right and duty of magistrates to execute the laws, join with me and brand as base hypocrisy the conduct of those who assemble year after year on the 4th of July, to fight over the battles of the Revolution, and yet "damn with faint praise," or load with obloquy, the memory of this man, who shed his blood in defense of life, liberty, property, and the freedom of the press!

Throughout that terrible night I find nothing to regret but this, that within the limits of our country, civil authority should have been so prostrated as to oblige a citizen to arm in his own defense, and to arm in vain. The gentleman says Lovejoy was presumptuous and imprudent—he "died as the fool dieth." And a reverend clergyman of the city* tells us that no citizen has a right to publish opinions disagreeable to the community! If any

* See Reverend Hubbard Winslow's discourse on *Liberty!* in which he defines "republican liberty" to be "liberty to say and do what the *prevailing* voice and will of the brotherhood will allow and protect."

mob follows such publication, on *him* rests its guilt! He must wait, forsooth, till the people come up to it and agree with him! This libel on liberty goes on to say that the want of right to speak as we think is an evil inseparable from republican institutions! If this be so, what are they worth? Welcome the despotism of the sultan, where one knows what he may publish and what he may not, rather than the tyranny of this many-headed monster, the mob, where we know not what we may do or say, till some fellow citizen has tried it, and paid for the lesson with his life. This clerical absurdity chooses as a check for the abuses of the press, not the *law,* but the dread of a mob. By so doing, it deprives not only the individual and the minority of their rights, but the majority also, since the expression of *their* opinion may sometimes provoke disturbance from the minority. A few men may make a mob as well as many. The majority, then, have no right, as Christian men, to utter their sentiments, if by any possibility it may lead to a mob! Shades of Hugh Peters and John Cotton, save us from such pulpits!

Imprudent to defend the liberty of the press! Why? Because the defense was unsuccessful? Does success gild crime into patriotism, and the want of it change heroic self-devotion to imprudence? Was Hampden* imprudent when he drew the sword and threw away the scabbard? Yet he, judged by that single hour, was unsuccessful. After a short exile, the race he hated sat again upon the throne.

Imagine yourself present when the first news of Bunker Hill battle reached a New England town. The tale would have run thus: "The patriots are routed—the redcoats victorious—Warren lies dead upon the field." With what scorn would that *Tory* have been received, who should have charged Warren with *imprudence!* who should have said that, bred a physician, he was "out of place" in that battle, and "died as the *fool dieth*"! [Great applause.] How would the intimation have been received, that Warren and his associates should have waited a better time? But if success be indeed the only criterion of prudence, *Respice finem* —wait till the end.

* John Hampden, noted patriot of the Puritan Revolution in England. [Ed.]

Presumptuous to assert the freedom of the press on American ground! Is the assertion of such freedom before the age? So much before the age as to leave one no right to make it because it displeases the community? Who invents this libel on his country? It is this very thing which entitles Lovejoy to greater praise. The disputed right which provoked the Revolution—taxation without representation—is far beneath that for which he died. [Strong and general expression of disapprobation.] One word, gentlemen. As much as *thought* is better than money, so much is the cause in which Lovejoy died nobler than a mere question of taxes. James Otis thundered in this Hall when the King did but touch his *pocket*. Imagine, if you can, his indignant eloquence, had England offered to put a gag upon his lips. [Great applause.]

The question that stirred the Revolution touched our civil interests. *This* concerns us not only as citizens, but as immortal beings. Wrapped up in its fate, saved or lost with it, are not only the voice of the statesman, but the instructions of the pulpit, and the progress of our faith.

The clergy "marvelously out of place" where free speech is battled for—liberty of speech on national sins? Does the gentleman remember that freedom to preach was first gained, dragging in its train freedom to print? I thank the clergy here present, as I reverence their predecessors, who did not so far forget their country in their immediate profession as to deem it duty to separate themselves from the struggle of '76—the Mayhews and Coopers, who remembered they were citizens before they were clergymen.

Mr. Chairman, from the bottom of my heart I thank that brave little band at Alton for resisting. We must remember that Lovejoy had fled from city to city, suffered the destruction of three presses patiently. At length he took counsel with friends, men of character, of tried integrity, of wide views, of Christian principle. They thought the crisis had come: it was full time to assert the laws. They saw around them, not a community like our own, of fixed habits, of character molded and settled, but one "in the gristle, not yet hardened into the bone of manhood." The people there, children of our older States, seem to have forgotten the blood-tried principles of their fathers the moment they lost sight

of our New England hills. Something was to be done to show them the priceless value of the freedom of the press, to bring back and set right their wandering and confused ideas. He and his advisers looked out on a community, staggering like a drunken man, indifferent to their rights and confused in their feelings. Deaf to argument, haply they might be stunned into sobriety. They saw that of which we cannot judge, the *necessity* of resistance. Insulted law called for it. Public opinion, fast hastening on the downward course, must be arrested.

Does not the event show they judged rightly? Absorbed in a thousand trifles, how has the nation all at once come to a stand? Men begin, as in 1776 and 1640, to discuss principles, to weigh characters, to find out where they are. Haply we may awake before we are borne over the precipice.

I am glad, Sir, to see this crowded house. It is good for us to be here. When Liberty is in danger, Faneuil Hall has the right, it is her duty, to strike the keynote for these United States. I am glad, for one reason, that remarks such as those to which I have alluded have been uttered here. The passage of these resolutions, in spite of this opposition, led by the Attorney General of the Commonwealth, will show more clearly, more decisively, the deep indignation with which Boston regards this outrage.

The Boston Mob

The 1830s constituted a "Martyr Age," in the memorable phrase of the English writer Harriet Martineau. During this period, anti-slavery elements in the Southern States were silenced or driven north. Riots in the Northern States represented a first effort on the part of the rowdy and exasperated groups to discourage anti-slavery crusaders from troubling their consciences and flouting social compacts and laws intended to keep slave Negroes securely in bonds and free Negroes servile. In 1835, a wave of riots shocked the growing antislavery movement. Its leaders and followers stood their ground and, in their appeal to civil rights, won their first victory over public opinion. Although riots and tragedies continued to punctuate later proceedings, the North had been challenged to permit free debate or admit itself ruled by mobs. Most famous of all the riots was that one in Boston which all but cost Garrison his life. He was soon after to appear a thorn and a nuisance to many sincere abolitionists who deplored what seemed to them his excessive language and dubious causes. Some of them could never understand that he stood between them and a Bill of Rights which, if sufficiently eroded, would cease to defend white people as well as Negroes. This, a less sophisticated public, showed itself better able to understand by making unforgettable the particular riot with which he was associated. On October 21, 1855, twenty years after that event, Wendell Phillips was to address a Boston meeting memorializing it and spelling out its significance for a new generation.

MR. PRESIDENT: I feel that I have very little right on this platform today. I stand here only to express my gratitude to those who truly and properly occupy it, for what we all owe them—the women and the men—who stood by our honor, and so nobly did our duties, when we forgot it and them twenty years ago.

At this hour, twenty years ago, I was below in the street—I

thank God I am inside the house now! I was not in the street as one of the mob, but as a spectator. I had come down from my office in Court Street to see what the excitement was. I did not understand antislavery then; that is, I did not understand the country in which I lived. We have all learned much since then: learned what antislavery means, learned what a republican government really is, learned the power of the press and of money, which I, at least, did not know then. I remember saying to the gentleman who stood next to me in the street: "Why does not the Mayor call out the regiment?" (I belonged to it then.) "We would cheerfully take arms in such a case as this. It is a very shameful business. Why does he stand there arguing? Why does he not call for the guns?" I did not then know that the men who should have borne them were the mob; that all there was of government in Boston was in the street; that the people, our final reliance for the execution of the laws, were there, in "broadcloth and broad daylight," in the street. Mayor Lyman knew it; and the only honorable and honest course open to him was to have said, "If I cannot *be* a magistrate, I will not *pretend* to be one."

I do not know whether to attribute the Mayor's disgraceful conduct to his confused notion of his official duties, or to a cowardly unwillingness to perform what he knew well enough to be his duty. A superficial observer of the press and pulpit of that day would be inclined to consider it the result of ignorance, and lay the blame at the door of our republican form of government, which thrusts up into important stations dainty gentlemen like Lyman, physicians never allowed to doctor any body but the body politic, or cunning tradesmen who have wriggled their slimy way to wealth—men who in a trial hour not only know nothing of their own duties, but do not even know where to go for advice. And for the preachers, I am inclined to think this stolid ignorance of civil rights and duties may be pleaded as a disgraceful excuse, leaving them guilty only of meddling in matters far above their comprehension. But one who looks deeper into the temper of that day will see plainly enough that the Mayor and the editors, with their companions "in broadcloth," were only blind to what they did not wish to see, and knew the right and wrong of the case well enough, only, like all half-educated people, they were but

poorly able to comprehend the vast importance of the wrong they were doing. The mobs which followed, directed against others than abolitionists, the ripe fruit of the seed here planted, opened their eyes somewhat.

Mr. Garrison has given us specimens enough of the press of that day. There was the *Daily Advertiser,* of course on the wrong side—respectable when its opponents are strong and numerous, and quite ready to be scurrilous when scurrility is safe and will pay, behind whose editorials a keen ear can always catch the clink of the dollar, entitled to be called the Rip Van Winkle of the press, should it ever, like Rip, wake up; the *Advertiser* condescended, strangely enough, to say, that it was *not surprised* (!) that papers abroad considered the meeting of mobocrats in the street below *a riot* (!); but the *wiser Advertiser* itself regarded it *"not so much as a riot as the prevention of a riot"!* It *"considered the whole transaction as the triumph of law over lawless violence, and the love of order over riot and confusion"!!* Dear, dreamy Van Winkle! and he goes on to *"rejoice"* at the exceeding "moderation" of the populace, that they did not murder Mr. Garrison on the spot! And this is the journal which Boston literature regards as its organ, and which Boston wealth befools itself by styling "respectable"!

Next came the scurrilous *Gazette,* which, it is said, repented of its course when it found that Northern subscribers fell off and Southerners continued to despise it as before; and which, outliving public forbearance and becoming bankrupt, earned thus the right to be melted into the *Daily Advertiser.*

With them in sad alliance marched the *Courier*—always strong and frank, whichever side it took, and even of whose great merit and bravery between that time and this, it is sufficient praise to say, that it was enough to outweigh its great wrong in 1835, and its vile servility now.

With rare daring, the *Christian Register,* the organ of the Unitarians, snatched the palm of infamy. In a moment of forgetful frankness, remembering, probably, the coward course of its own sect, it counseled hypocrisy; suiting manner to matter, it *hints* to the abolitionists that they should imitate the example, as, with laughable ignorance, it avers, of the early Christians of

Trajan's day, and meet in secret, if the "*vanity*" of the ladies would allow! The coward priest forgot, if he ever knew, that the early Christians met in secret beneath the pavements of Rome, only to pray for the martyrs whose crosses lined the highways, whose daring defied paganism at its own altars, and whose humanity stopped the bloody games of Rome in the upper air; that they met beneath the ground, not so much to hide themselves, as to get strength for attacks on wicked laws and false altars.

Infamy, however, at that day, was not a monopoly of one sect. Hubbard Winslow, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, strictly orthodox, a bigot in good and regular standing, shortly after this preached a sermon to illustrate and defend the doctrine, that no man, under a republican government, has a right to promulgate any opinion but such as "a majority of the brotherhood would allow and protect"; and he is said to have boasted that Judge Story thanked him for such a discourse!

The Mayor played a most shuffling and dishonorable part. For some time previous, he had held private conferences with leading abolitionists, urging them to discontinue their meetings, professing, all the while, entire friendship, and the most earnest determination to protect them in their rights at any cost. The abolitionists treated him, in return, with the utmost confidence. They yielded to his wishes, so far as to consent to do nothing that would increase the public excitement, with this exception, that they insisted on holding meetings often enough to assert their *right* to meet. Yet, while they were thus honorably avoiding everything which would needlessly excite the public mind, going to the utmost verge of submission and silence that duty permitted—while the abolitionists, with rare moderation, were showing this magnanimous forbearance and regard to the weakness of public authority and the reckless excitement of the public—the Mayor himself, in utter violation of official decorum and personal honor, accepted the chair of the public meeting assembled in Faneuil Hall, and presided over that assembly, an assembly which many intended should rouse a mob against the abolitionists, and which none but the weak or willfully blind could avoid seeing must lead to that result. In his opening speech to that factious meeting, the Mayor, under oath at that moment to protect

every citizen in his rights, and doubly bound just then by private assurances to these very abolitionists, forgot all his duty, all his pledges, so far as to publicly *warn them of the danger of their meeting*—a warning or threat, the memory of which might well make him tremblingly anxious to save Garrison's life, since of any blood shed that day, every law, divine and human, would have held the Mayor guilty.

Such was the temper of those times. The ignorant were not aware, and the wise were too corrupt to confess, that the most precious of human rights, free thought, was at stake. These women knew it, felt the momentous character of the issue, and consented to stand in the gap. Those were trial hours. I never think of them without my shame for my native city being swallowed up in gratitude to those who stood so bravely for the right. Let us not consent to be ashamed of the Boston of 1835. Those howling wolves in the streets were not Boston. These brave men and women were Boston. We will remember no other.

I never open the statute book of Massachusetts without thanking Ellis Gray Loring and Samuel J. May, Charles Follen and Samuel E. Sewall,* and those around me who stood with them, for preventing Edward Everett from blackening it with a law making free speech an indictable offence. And we owe it to fifty or sixty women, and a dozen or two of men, that free speech was saved, in 1835, in the city of Boston. Indeed, we owe it mainly to one man. If there is one here who loves Boston, who loves her honor, who rejoices to know that, however fine the thread, there *is* a thread which bridges over that dark and troubled wave, and connects us by a living nerve with the freemen of the Revolution —that Boston, though betrayed by her magistrates, her wealth, her press, and her pulpits, never utterly bowed her neck, let him remember that we owe it to you, Sir [Mr. Francis Jackson], who offered to the women not allowed to meet here, even though the Mayor was in this hall, the use of your house; and one sentence

* Notables of Garrisonian abolitionism. Follen was a distinguished German Republican refugee who became a professor of German at Harvard College, but whose professorship was permitted to expire when he joined Garrison. Reverend May became one of the best known of abolitionists. [Ed.]

of your letter deserves to be read whenever Boston men are met together to celebrate the preservation of the right of free speech in the city of Adams and Otis. History, which always loves courage, will write it on a page whiter than marble and more incorruptible than gold. You said, Sir, in answer to a letter of thanks for the use of your house:

> If a large majority of this community choose to turn a deaf ear to the wrongs which are inflicted upon their countrymen in other portions of the land—if they are content to turn away from the sight of oppression, and "pass by on the other side,"—so it must be.
>
> But when they undertake in any way to impair or annul my right to speak, write, and publish upon any subject, and more especially upon enormities which are the common concern of every lover of his country and his kind—so it must not be—so it shall not be, if I for one can prevent it. Upon this great right let us hold on at all hazards. And should we, in its exercise, be driven from public halls to private dwellings, one house at least shall be consecrated to its preservation. And if, in defense of this sacred privilege, which man did not give me, and shall not (if I can help it) take from me, this roof and these walls shall be leveled to the earth—let them fall, if they must. They cannot crumble in a better cause. They will appear of very little value to me, after their owner shall have been whipped into silence.

. . . We owe it to one man that a public meeting was held, within a month, by these same women, in the city of Boston. But to their honor be it remembered, also—a fact which Mr. Garrison omitted to state—that when Mayor Lyman urged them to go home, they left this hall in public procession and went "home" to the house of Mrs. M. W. Chapman,* in West Street, to organize and finish their meeting that very afternoon. To Mrs. Chapman's pen we owe the most living picture of that whole scene, and her able, graphic, and eloquent reports of the proceedings of the Female Antislavery Society, and specially of this day, have hung up to everlasting contempt the "men of property and standing"—the "respectable" men of Boston.

* Maria Weston Chapman (1806-1885), of distinguished family, a fiery Garrisonian and writer. Her grandson, John Jay Chapman, was himself a remarkable individualist and author. [Ed.]

Let us open, for a moment, the doors of the hall which stood here, and listen to the Mayor receiving his lesson in civil duty from the noble women of this society.

MR. LYMAN: Go home, ladies, go home.

PRESIDENT: What renders it necessary we should go home?

MR. LYMAN: I am the Mayor of the city, and I cannot now explain; but will call upon you this evening.

PRESIDENT: If the ladies will be seated, we will take the sense of the meeting.

MR. LYMAN: Don't stop, ladies, go home.

PRESIDENT: Will the ladies listen to a letter addressed to the Society, by Francis Jackson, Esq.?

MR. LYMAN: Ladies, do you wish to see a scene of bloodshed and confusion? If you do not, go home.

ONE OF THE LADIES: Mr. Lyman, your personal friends are the instigators of this mob; have you ever used your personal influence with them?

MR. LYMAN: I know no personal friends; I am merely an official. Indeed, ladies, you must retire. It is dangerous to remain.

LADY: If this is the last bulwark of freedom, we may as well die here as anywhere.

There is nothing braver than that in the history of the Long Parliament, or of the Roman Senate.

At that Faneuil Hall meeting, one of "the family" was present —one of that family which was never absent when a deed of infamy was to be committed against the slave—a family made up mostly of upstart attorneys, who fancy themselves statesmen, because able to draw a writ or pick holes in an indictment. Mr. Thomas B. Curtis read the resolutions; and then followed three speeches, by Harrison Gray Otis, Richard Fletcher, and Peleg Sprague, unmatched for adroit, ingenious, suggestive argument and exhortation to put down, legally or violently—each hearer could choose for himself—all public meetings on the subject of slavery in the city of Boston. Everything influential in the city was arrayed against this society of a few women. I could not but reflect, as I sat here, how immortal principle is. Reverend Henry Ware, Jr., read the notice of this society's meeting from Dr. Channing's pulpit, and almost every press in the city woke bark-

ing at him next morning for what was called his "impudence." He is gone to his honored grave; many of those who met in this hall in pursuance of that notice are gone likewise. They died, as Whittier so well says,

> their brave hearts breaking slow,
> But, self-forgetful to the last,
> In words of cheer and bugle glow,
> Their breath upon the darkness passed.

In those days, as we gathered round their graves, and resolved that, the "narrower the circle became, we would draw the closer together," we envied the dead their rest. Men ceased to slander them in that sanctuary; and as we looked forward to the desolate vista of calamity and toil before us, and thought of the temptations which beset us on either side from worldly prosperity which a slight sacrifice of principle might secure, or social ease so close at hand by only a little turning aside, we almost envied the dead the quiet sleep to which we left them, the harvest reaped, and the seal set beyond the power of change. . . .

Here stands today the man [Garrison] whom Boston wealth and Boston respectability went home, twenty years ago this night, and gloried in having crushed. The loudest boasters are gone. He stands today among us, these very walls, these ideas which breathe and burn around us, saying for him, "I still live." If, twenty or twice twenty years hence, he too shall have passed away, may it not be till his glad ear has caught the jubilee of the emancipated millions whom his life has been given to save!

This very Female Antislavery Society which was met here twenty years ago did other good service but a few months after, in getting the Court of Massachusetts to recognize that great principle of freedom, that a slave, *brought into a Northern State,* is free. It was in the well-known Med case. We owe that to the Boston Female Antislavery Society. Today, Judge Kane and the Supreme Court, which alone can control him, are endeavoring to annihilate that principle which twenty years ago was established. How far and how soon they may be successful, God only knows.

Truly, as Mr. Garrison has said, the intellectual and moral growth of antislavery has been great within twenty years; but

who shall deny that, in the same twenty years, the political, the organic, the civil growth of slavery has been more than equal? We stand here today with a city redeemed—how far? Just so far as this meeting commemorates—the right of free speech is secured. Thank God! in twenty years, we have proved that an antislavery meeting is not only possible, but respectable, in Massachusetts—that is all we have proved. Lord Erskine said a newspaper was stronger than government. We have got many newspapers on our side. Ideas will, in the end, beat down anything; we have got free course for ideas.

But let us not cheer ourselves too hastily, for the government, the wealth, the public opinion, of this very city in which we meet, remain today almost as firmly anchored as ever on the side of slavery. Vanes turn only when the wind shifts, so the *Daily Advertiser* has not changed a whit—not a whit. The same paper that spoke doubtful words before October 21st, hoped the meeting would be stopped, and afterward could not quite decide whether there was a mob or not, but was glad the ladies were not allowed to hold their meeting—that same paper would doze through the same shameless part today. That paper, which represented then so well the mobocrats in broadcloth, has passed from a father wearied in trying to hold Massachusetts back, to his son—whose accession, to reverse James the First's motto, "no day followed"—and it is published today with the same spirit, represents the same class, actuated exactly with the same purpose. If there is strength outside the city, in the masses, enough to rebuke that class and that press and that purpose, and give the State of Massachusetts more emphatically to some kind of antislavery, it is still a struggle. I would not rejoice, therefore, too much. We must discriminate. "To break your leg twice over the same stone is your own fault," says the Spanish proverb.

I came here today to thank God that Boston never wanted a person to claim his inalienable right to utter his thoughts on the subject of slavery, nor a spot upon which he could do it; that is all my rejoicing today. And in that cornerstone of individual daring, of fidelity to conscience, I recognize the possibility of the emancipation of three millions of slaves. But that possibility is to be made actual by labors as earnest and unceasing, by a self-devo-

tion as entire, as that which has marked the twenty years we have just passed.

I find that these people, who have made this day famous, were accused in their own time of harsh language and overboldness, and great disparagement of dignities. These were the three charges brought against the Female Antislavery Society in 1835. The women forgot their homes, it was said, in endeavoring to make the men do their duty. It was a noble lesson which the sisters and mothers of that time set the women of the present day —I hope they will follow it.

There was another charge brought against them: it was that they had no reverence for dignitaries. The friend who sits here on my right (Mrs. Southwick) dared to rebuke a slaveholder with a loud voice, in a room just before, if not then, consecrated by the presence of Chief Justice [Lemuel] Shaw,* and the press was astonished at her boldness. I hope, though she has left the city, she has left representatives behind her who will dare rebuke any slave hunter, or any servant of the slave power, with the same boldness, frankness, and defiance of authorities, and contempt of parchment.

Then there was another charge brought against their meetings, that they indulged in exceedingly bold language about pulpits and laws and wicked magistrates. That is a sin which I hope will not die out. God grant we may inherit that also.

I should like to know very much how many there are in this hall today who were out in the street, as actual mobocrats, twenty years ago. I know there are some here who signed the various petitions to the city government to prevent the meeting from being held; but it would be an interesting fact to know how many are here today, actually enlisted under the antislavery banner, who tore that sign to pieces. I wish we had those relics; the piece of that door which was long preserved, the door so coolly locked by Charles Burleigh—it was a touching relic. We ought to have a portion of that sign which the Mayor threw down as a tub to the whale, hoping to save some semblance of his authority, hoping the multitude would be satisfied with the sign,

* A famous jurist on the Massachusetts Supreme Court; father-in-law of Herman Melville. [Ed.]

and spare the women in this hall, forgetting that a mob is controlled only by its fears, not by pity or good manners.

But, Mr. President, it is a sad story to think of. Antislavery is a sad history to read, sad to look back upon. What a miserable refuse public opinion has been for the past twenty years!—what a wretched wreck of all that republican education ought to have secured! Take up that file of papers which Mr. Garrison showed you, and think, Republicanism, a Protestant pulpit, free schools, the model government, had existed in our city for sixty years, and this was the result! A picture, the very copy of that which Sir Robert Peel held up in the British Parliament, within a month after the mob, as proof that republicanism could never succeed. It is a sad picture to look back upon. The only light which redeems it is the heroism that consecrated this hall, and one house in Hollis Street, places which Boston will yet make pilgrimages to honor.

The only thing that Americans (for let us be Americans today, not simply abolitionists)—the only thing for which Americans can rejoice, this day, is, that *everything* was not rotten. The *whole* head was not sick, nor the *whole* heart faint. There were *ten men,* even in Sodom! And when the Mayor forgot his duty, when the pulpit prostituted itself, and when the press became a pack of hounds, the women of Boston, and a score or two of men, remembered Hancock and Adams, and did their duty. And if there are young people who hear me today, let us hope that when this special cause of antislavery effort is past and gone, when another generation shall have come upon the stage, and new topics of dispute have arisen, there will be no more such scenes. How shall we ever learn toleration for what we do not believe? The last lesson a man ever learns is that liberty of thought and speech is the right for all mankind; that the man who denies every article of our creed is to be allowed to preach just as often and just as loud as we ourselves. We have learned this—been taught it by persecution on the question of slavery. No matter whose the lips that would speak, they must be free and ungagged. Let us always remember that he does not really believe his own opinions who dares not give free scope to his opponent. Persecution is really

want of faith in our creed. Let us see to it, my friends, abolitionists, that we learn the lesson the whole circle round. Let us believe that the whole of truth can never do harm to the whole of virtue. Trust it. And remember that, in order to get the whole of truth, you must allow every man, right or wrong, freely to utter his conscience, and protect him in so doing.

The same question was wrought out here twenty years ago, as was wrought in the protest of fifty or a hundred abolitionists, when an infidel (Abner Kneeland)* was sent to Boston jail for preaching his sentiments. I hope that we shall all go out of this hall, remembering the highest lesson of this day and place, that every man's conscience is sacred. No matter how good our motives are in trying to gag him! Mayor Lyman had some good motives that day, had he only known what his office meant, and stayed at home, if he felt himself not able to fill it. It is not motives. Entire, unshackled freedom for every man's lips, no matter what his doctrine; the safety of free discussion, no matter how wide its range; no check on the peaceful assemblage of thoughtful men! Let us consecrate our labors for twenty years to come in doing better than those who went before us, and widening the circle of their principle into the full growth of its actual and proper significance.

Let me thank the women who came here twenty years ago, some of whom are met here today, for the good they have done me. I thank them for all they have taught me. I had read Greek and Roman and English history; I had by heart the classic eulogies of brave old men and martyrs; I dreamed, in my folly, that I heard the same tone in my youth from the cuckoo lips of Edward Everett—these women taught me my mistake. They taught me that down in those hearts which loved a principle for itself, asked no man's leave to think or speak, true to their convictions, no matter at what hazard, flowed the real blood of '76, of 1640, of the hemlock-drinker of Athens, and of the martyr-saints of Jerusalem. I thank them for it! My eyes were sealed, so that, although I knew the Adamses and Otises of 1776, and the

* See Henry S. Commager, "The Blasphemy of Abner Kneeland," *New England Quarterly*, March 1935, pp. 29 ff. [Ed.]

Mary Dyers and Ann Hutchinsons of older times, I could not recognize the Adamses and Otises, the Dyers and Hutchinsons, whom I met in the streets of '35. These women opened my eyes, and I thank them and you [turning to Mrs. Southwick and Miss Henrietta Sargent, who sat upon the platform] for that anointing. May our next twenty years prove us all apt scholars of such brave instruction!

The Right of Petition

Abolitionists had a problem: how to advance their cause without hopelessly repelling potential supporters by offending their basic attitudes. States rights were approved in the North, as well as in the South. (Later, Northern States would defy acts of Congress and decisions of the United States Supreme Court helpful to slaveholders, on grounds that these acts and decisions were repugnant to Northern liberties.) Northern white people, as well as Southerners, also generally deemed Negroes inferior and requiring restraints and segregation. How could abolitionists appeal to their Northern neighbors in behalf of antislavery measures? In 1836, Southerners in the House of Representatives handed them an issue by resolving that Congress ought no longer to be insulted by the receipt of petitions praying an end of slavery, whether in Washington, D. C., or anywhere else. Such petitions were to be "laid upon the table"—that is, ignored: a measure which was in patent defiance of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This act of the proslavery forces brought to the fore John Quincy Adams, whose own Presidency (1825-1829) had been undermined by the trickery of Andrew Jackson's supporters. They had accused Adams, absurdly, of a "corrupt bargain," and, on the strength of this, hamstrung in Congress his benign program of internal improvements, a Pan-American Union, and a respect for Indian rights. Adams became a Congressman from Massachusetts. In 1836, on the heels of the antipetition conspiracy, he began, alone, a fight in defense of the Bill of Rights which added a new dimension to the antislavery struggle. Southern aggression resulted in passage of the "Gag Rule," which, increasingly, joined Adams to antislavery. The following public address was Wendell Phillips's first. He delivered it at a meeting in Lynn of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, March 28, 1837. It shows abolitionists linking themselves with the general good and, in the process, gaining strength without loss of principle.

MR. PRESIDENT: One of the previous resolutions of this meeting refers to the success of the cause of abolition within the last few months, and the bright hopes with which we may enter on another year of labor. The petitions which have loaded the tables of our State and national legislatures may certainly be considered as one great cause of that success, and the pursuing of the same course, the best ground of hope for the future. Such circumstances naturally fix every eye on that distinguished citizen to whom the resolution refers. His course during the last session deserves the gratitude of every American; for in that contest, he was not the representative of any State or any party, but the champion of the fundamental principles of the Constitution. The right of petition we had thought as firmly fixed in the soil of America as the Saxon race which brought it here. It was the breath of life during our colonial history, and is recognized on every page of our history since as the bulwark of civil liberty. Antiquity and the historical associations of our mother country had rendered it so sacred that we looked confidently to that for protection and redress, when all other means should fail.

Upon the friends of abolition, of free discussion, of equal rights, throughout the land, insult had been heaped on insult, and outrage added to outrage, till we thought that malice had done its worst. All the outworks that guard the citadel of liberty had been in turn overthrown. The dearest rights of freemen had been, one by one, torn from us. We had heard, at a time of profound peace, in the midst of our most crowded cities, the voice of the multitude once and again overwhelm the voice of the laws, almost without the shadow of an attempt at resistance on the part of the civil magistrate. We had seen a price set by a Southern legislature on the head of a citizen of Massachusetts, for presuming to think as he pleased, and to speak what he thought, within the borders of the old Commonwealth; and this insult had been answered only by a recommendation on the part of our own Executive that whoever dared to move the question of slavery should be proceeded against at common law. We had long known that we held our lives and property at the will of the mob; but now, as if by common consent, the North seems ready to yield to Southern threats the right to speak and to think. "The time had

come when eloquence was to be gagged, and reason to be hoodwinked." We had heard in old Faneuil, and from the lips of those whose very names should have been a guaranty of their attachment to freedom, principles which would have blotted out every page of our past history.

Borne down, but not dismayed, confident that the hearts of the people, could the truth but reach them, were sound at the core, we sought out the weapon which our fathers wielded; we besieged the doors of our State legislatures with petitions and remonstrances. I need not tell the county of Essex how that appeal was answered. Of that answer they have already taken note. There was one refuge left—the government which our fathers established, "to promote justice, and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity." There, at least, we might hope to find men able to look behind circumstances to principles.

Who does not recollect the astonishment—for the first feeling was rather astonishment than indignation—with which we heard that the door of the capitol was closed to the voice of the people? It seemed as if the nation had been pressing on blindfold, and we opened our eyes only to behold the precipice over which we were rushing; as if the time-honored rights which had been fought for on British ground, and which our fathers had inherited, not won, were again to be struggled for. The car of Liberty had rolled back four centuries, and the contest whose history is written on the battlefields and scaffolds of England had been all in vain. Well might hope sicken, and the bravest despair.

And who does not recollect the thrill of enthusiastic feeling with which we heard that Adams had thrown himself into the gap, and was contending, at first single-handed, for the right of the citizen to petition, no matter what his creed, his color, or his party? The effort was the nobler in that he was not a member of the body of men in whose persons this right had been invaded. No interest of his or of his friends had been touched. Against our efforts he had all along protested; but, statesmanlike, he saw the end from the beginning. When rights were invaded, he was willing to side with any who rallied to protect them. How much truer to the name he bore than many others who stood higher in

our esteem, and were dearer to us, than himself! We hail him as the champion of free principles. We accord to him the high merit of a pure attachment to civil liberty which would not permit her to be attacked, even when she appeared in the garb of a party which it was his interest, and he felt it to be his duty, to oppose; of a clear-sighted, far-reaching wisdom, which discovered the first approach of corruption and snuffed oppression in the tainted breeze; of a noble disregard to party lines, when to have adhered to them would have compromised the fundamental principles of our government.

The supineness of the North under the act of Southern aggression, and still more, the indifference with which Calhoun's bill was generally received, are the strongest arguments we can offer to our fellow citizens to induce them to look at this subject. Why, such a proposition on any other occasion would have set the whole country in a blaze! It would have sent an electric shock through the land, and called forth from its slumbering retreats all the spirit of olden time. What is it that thus palsies our strength and blinds our foresight? We have become so familiar with slavery that we are no longer aware of its deadening influence on the body politic. Pinkney's words have become true: "The stream of general liberty cannot flow on unpolluted through the mire of partial bondage." And this is the reason we render to those who ask us why we are contending against Southern slavery —*that it may not result in Northern slavery;* because time has shown that it sends out its poisonous branches over all our fair land, and corrupts the very air we breathe. Our fate is bound up with that of the South, so that they cannot be corrupt and we sound; they cannot fall, and we stand. Disunion is coming, *unless* we discuss this subject; for the spirit of freedom and the spirit of slavery are contending here for the mastery. They cannot live together: as well, like the robber of classic fable, chain the living and the dead together, as bind up such discordant materials, and think it will last. *We* must prosper, and a sound public opinion root out slavery from the land, or there must grow up a mighty slaveholding state to overshadow and mildew our free institutions.

I have said, Mr. President, that we owe gratitude to Mr. Adams for his defense of the right of petition. A little while ago it would

have been absurd to talk of gratitude being due to any man for such a service. It would have been said, "Why, he only did his duty, what every other man would have done; it was too simple and plain a case to need a thought." But it is true that, now, even for this we ought to be grateful. And this fact is another, a melancholy proof of the stride which the influence of slavery has made within a few years. It throws such dimness over the minds of freemen that what would once have been thought the alphabet of civil right, they hail as a discovery.

But I will not wander from my subject to slavery; it is our own rights which are at issue; and the first cry that awakened the nation to the importance of that issue, was the voice of the ex-President. On that "gray discrowned head" were fixed, in awful suspense, the eyes of the nation. Others came at length to his aid. I wish this resolution may pass, that, as far as in us lies, he may feel that Massachusetts echoes back his cry to arms, is ready to sustain him and his colleagues in their noble course, is girding herself for the contest—and, come what may, will see to it that, however the lights of other States may flicker with the breeze, her torch shall burn bright and unchanging on the eminence which she has never deserted or betrayed.

Philosophy of the Abolition Movement

The 1840s were filled with momentous developments, so far as antislavery and reform were both concerned. The abolitionists split on complex issues of program and tactics. Some thought women should not make public appearances: this would harm their status as women (it was thought) and drive off hordes of Northerners who abominated slavery. Some thought the churches ought not to be harshly criticized for taking a moderate view of slaveholders, since harsh language directed at conservative divines simply antagonized their parishioners. Some thought political action was needed to unite Northerners on a moderate antislavery platform. In 1840, a handful of "political abolitionists" offered as their Presidential candidate a former slaveholder and distinguished antislavery leader, James G. Birney. He received only a few thousand votes that year, and, in 1844, no more than some sixty-two thousand votes. In that year, however, his fifteen thousand votes in New York State defeated the national candidacy of Henry Clay, and forced the country to view abolitionists with new fear and respect. In 1848, the Free Soil Party ran ex-President Martin Van Buren as its candidate. Van Buren was a "doughface," and ordinarily eager to appease slaveholders. He had, however, been pushed aside by more determined Northern appeasers, willing, if necessary, to sacrifice the uncommitted West to Southern dissatisfaction. Accordingly, Van Buren was willing, in that year, to represent Northerners suspicious of Southern plots and even abolitionists who hungered for a feeling of consensus with their Northern brethren. The Free Soil Party garnered only about a quarter of a million votes out of two and three-quarter million, and Van Buren himself returned dutifully to the Democratic Party stable. But political abolitionists continued to hope they had broken out of their splintered and weak circles and would be able to associate with mass movements and popular ideas. With such moderates of Free Soil as Salmon P. Chase, Charles Sumner, Thaddeus Stevens, and numerous others on the scene, what sig-

nificance could Garrison and Phillips, and their tiny groups claim? In the following speech, delivered before the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, in Boston, January 27, 1853, Phillips undertook to redefine their point of view and achievements.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to present, from the business committee, the following resolution:

Resolved, That the object of this society is now, as it has always been, to convince our countrymen, by arguments addressed to their hearts and consciences, that slaveholding is a heinous crime, and that the duty, safety, and interest of all concerned demand its immediate abolition, without expatriation.

I wish, Mr. Chairman, to notice some objections that have been made to our course ever since Mr. Garrison began his career, and which have been lately urged again, with considerable force and emphasis, in the columns of the *London Leader,* the able organ of a very respectable and influential class in England. I hope, Sir, you will not think it waste of time to bring such a subject before you. I know these objections have been made a thousand times, that they have been often answered, though we generally submitted to them in silence, willing to let results speak for us. But there are times when justice to the slave will not allow us to be silent. There are many in this country, many in England, who have had their attention turned, recently, to the antislavery cause. They are asking, "Which is the best and most efficient method of helping it?" Engaged ourselves in an effort for the slave, which time has tested and success hitherto approved, we are very properly desirous that they should join us in our labors, and pour into this channel the full tide of their new zeal and great resources. Thoroughly convinced ourselves that our course is wise, we can honestly urge others to adopt it. Long experience gives us a right to advise. The fact that our course, more than all other efforts, has caused that agitation which has awakened these new converts, gives us a right to counsel them. They are our spiritual children: for their sakes, we would free the cause we love and trust from every seeming defect and plausible objection. For the slave's sake, we reiterate our explanations, that he may

lose no tittle of help by the mistakes or misconceptions of his friends.

All that I have to say on these points will be to you, Mr. Chairman, very trite and familiar; but the facts may be new to some, and I prefer to state them here, in Boston, where we have lived and worked, because, if our statements are incorrect, if we claim too much, our assertions can be easily answered and disproved.

The charges to which I refer are these: that, in dealing with slaveholders and their apologists, we indulge in fierce denunciations, instead of appealing to their reason and common sense by plain statements and fair argument; that we might have won the sympathies and support of the nation, if we would have submitted to argue this question with a manly patience; but, instead of this, we have outraged the feelings of the community by attacks, unjust and unnecessarily severe, on its most valued institutions, and gratified our spleen by indiscriminate abuse of leading men, who were often honest in their intentions, however mistaken in their views; that we have utterly neglected the ample means that lay around us to convert the nation, submitted to no discipline, formed no plan, been guided by no foresight, but hurried on in childish, reckless, blind, and hotheaded zeal—bigots in the narrowness of our views, and fanatics in our blind fury of invective and malignant judgment of other men's motives.

There are some who come upon our platform, and give us the aid of names and reputations less burdened than ours with popular odium, who are perpetually urging us to exercise charity in our judgments of those about us, and to consent to argue these questions. These men are ever parading their wish to draw a line between themselves and us, because *they must be permitted* to wait, to trust more to reason than feeling, to indulge a generous charity, to rely on the sure influence of simple truth, uttered in love, etc., etc. I reject with scorn all these implications that *our* judgments are uncharitable, that *we* are lacking in patience, that *we* have any other dependence than on the simple truth, spoken with Christian frankness, yet with Christian love. These lectures, to which you, Sir, and all of us, have so often listened, would be impertinent, if they were not rather ridiculous for the gross

ignorance they betray of the community, of the cause, and of the whole course of its friends.

The article in the *Leader* to which I refer is signed "Ion," and may be found in the *Liberator* of December 17, 1852. The writer is cordial and generous in his recognition of Mr. Garrison's claim to be the representative of the antislavery movement, and does entire justice to his motives and character. The criticisms of "Ion" were reprinted in the *Christian Register,* of this city, the organ of the Unitarian denomination. The editors of that paper, with their usual Christian courtesy, love of truth, and fair dealing, omitted all "Ion's" expressions of regard for Mr. Garrison and appreciation of his motives, and reprinted only those parts of the article which undervalue his sagacity and influence, and endorse the common objections to his method and views. You will see in a moment, Mr. President, that it is with such men and presses "Ion" thinks Mr. Garrison has not been sufficiently wise and patient, in trying to win their help for the antislavery cause. Perhaps, were he on the spot, it would tire even his patience, and puzzle even his sagacity, to make any other use of them than that of the drunken Helot—a warning to others how disgusting is mean vice. Perhaps, were he here, he would see that the best and only use to be made of them is to let them unfold their own characters, and then show the world how rotten our politics and religion are, that they naturally bear such fruit. "Ion" quotes Mr. Garrison's original declaration, in the *Liberator:*

> I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, AND I WILL BE HEARD.
>
> It is *pretended* that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective and the precipitancy of my measures. *The charge is not true.* On this question, my influence, humble as it is, is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years, not perniciously, but beneficially, not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear testimony that I was right. I desire to thank God that he enables me to disregard "the fear of man, which bringeth a snare," and to speak his truth in its simplicity and power.

"Ion" then goes on to say:

This is a defense which has been generally accepted on this side of the Atlantic, and many are the Abolitionists among us whom it has encouraged in honesty and impotence, and whom it has converted into conscientious hinderances. . . .

We would have Mr. Garrison to say, "I will be as harsh as *progress*, as uncompromising as *success*." If a man speaks for his own gratification, he may be as "harsh" as he pleases; but if he speaks for the downtrodden and oppressed, he must be content to put a curb upon the tongue of holiest passion, and speak only as harshly as is compatible with the amelioration of the evil he proposes to redress. Let the question be again repeated: Do you seek for the slave vengeance or redress? If you seek retaliation, go on denouncing. But distant Europe honors William Lloyd Garrison because it credits him with seeking for the slave simply redress. We say, therefore, that "uncompromising" policy is not to be measured by absolute justice, but by practical amelioration of the slave's condition. Amelioration as fast as you can get it—absolute justice as soon as you can reach it.

He quotes the sentiment of Confucius, that he would choose for a leader "a man who would maintain a steady vigilance in the direction of affairs, who was capable of forming plans, and of executing them," and says:

The philosopher was right in placing wisdom and executive capacity above courage; for, down to this day, our popular movements are led by heroes who *fear* nothing, and who *win* nothing. . . .

There is no question raised in these articles as to the work to be done, but only as to the mode of *really* doing it. The platform resounds with announcements of principle, which is but *asserting* the right, while nothing but contempt is showered on policy, which is the *realization* of right. The air is filled with all high cries and spirited denunciations; indignation is at a premium; and this is called advocacy. . . . But to calculate, to make sure of your aim, is to be described as one who is too cold to feel, too genteel to strike.

Further on, he observes:

If an artillery officer throws shell after shell which never reach the enemy, he is replaced by someone with a better eye and a surer aim. But in the artillery battle of opinion, *to mean* to hit is quite sufficient; and

if you have a certain grand indifference as to whether you hit or not, you may count on public applause. . . .

A man need be no less militant, as the soldier of facts, than as the agent of swords. But the arena of argument needs discipline, no less than that of arms. It is this which the antislavery party seem to me not only to overlook, but to despise. They do not put their valor to drill. Neither on the field nor the platform has courage any inherent capacity of taking care of itself.

The writer then proceeds to make a quotation from Mr. Emerson, the latter part of which I will read:

Let us withhold every *reproachful,* and, if we can, every *indignant* remark. In this cause, we must renounce our temper, and the risings of pride. If there be any man who thinks the ruin of a race of men a small matter compared with the last decorations and completions of his own comfort—who would not so much as part with his ice cream to save them from rapine and manacles—I think I must not hesitate to satisfy *that* man that also his cream and vanilla are safer and cheaper by placing the Negro nation on a fair footing, than by robbing them. If the Virginian piques himself on the picturesque luxury of his vassalage, on the heavy Ethiopian manners of his house servants, their silent obedience, their hue of bronze, their turbaned heads, and would not exchange them for the more intelligent but precarious hired services of whites, I shall not refuse to show *him* that, when their free papers are made out, it will still be their interest to remain on his estates; and that the oldest planters of Jamaica are convinced that it is cheaper to pay wages than to own slaves.

The critic takes exception to Mr. Garrison's approval of the denunciatory language in which Daniel O'Connell rebuked the giant sin of America, and concludes his article with this sentence:

When William Lloyd Garrison praises the great Celtic monarch of invective for this dire outpouring, he acts the part of the boy who fancies that the terror is in the war whoop of the savage, unmindful of the quieter muskets of the civilized infantry, whose unostentatious execution blows whoop and tomahawk to the Devil.

Before passing to a consideration of these remarks of "Ion," let me say a word in relation to Mr. Emerson. I do not consider him as indorsing any of these criticisms on the abolitionists. His

services to the most radical antislavery movement have been generous and marked. He has never shrunk from any odium which lending his name and voice to it would incur. Making fair allowance for his peculiar taste, habits, and genius, he has given a generous amount of aid to the antislavery movement, and never let its friends want his cordial "Godspeed."

. . . These, Sir, are the charges which have uniformly been brought against all reformers in all ages. "Ion" thinks the same faults are chargeable on the leaders of all the "popular movements" in England, which, he says, "are led by heroes who *fear* nothing and who *win* nothing." If the leaders of popular movements in Great Britain for the last fifty years have been *losers,* I should be curious to know what party, in "Ion's" opinion, have won? My Lord Derby and his friends seem to think Democracy has made, and is making, dangerous headway. If the men who, by popular agitation, outside of Parliament, wrung from a powerful oligarchy Parliamentary Reform, and the Abolition of the Test Acts, of High Post Rates, of Catholic Disability, of Negro Slavery and the Corn Laws, did "not win anything," it would be hard to say what winning is. If the men who, without the ballot, made Peel their tool and conquered the Duke of Wellington, are considered unsuccessful, pray what kind of a thing would success be? Those who now, at the head of that same middle class, demand the separation of Church and State, and the extension of the ballot, may well guess, from the fluttering of Whig and Tory dovecotes, that soon they will "win" that same "nothing." Heaven grant they may enjoy the same *ill success* with their predecessors! On our side of the ocean, too, we ought deeply to sympathize with the leaders of the temperance movement in their entire want of success! If "Ion's" mistakes about the antislavery cause lay as much on the surface as those I have just noticed, it would be hardly worth while to reply to him; for as to these, he certainly exhibits only "the extent and variety of his misinformation."

His remarks upon the antislavery movement are, however, equally inaccurate. I claim, before you who know the true state of the case—I claim for the antislavery movement with which this society is identified, that, looking back over its whole course,

and considering the men connected with it in the mass, it has been marked by sound judgment, unerring foresight, the most sagacious adaptation of means to ends, the strictest self-discipline, the most thorough research, and an amount of patient and manly argument addressed to the conscience and intellect of the nation, such as no other cause of the kind, in England or this country, has ever offered. I claim, also, that its course has been marked by a cheerful surrender of all individual claims to merit or leadership—the most cordial welcoming of the slightest effort, of every honest attempt, to lighten or to break the chain of the slave. I need not waste time by repeating the superfluous confession that we are men, and therefore do not claim to be perfect. Neither would I be understood as denying that we use denunciation, and ridicule, and every other weapon that the human mind knows. We must plead guilty, if there be guilt in not knowing how to separate the sin from the sinner. With all the fondness for abstractions attributed to us, we are not yet capable of that. We are fighting a momentous battle at desperate odds—one against a thousand. Every weapon that ability or ignorance, wit, wealth, prejudice, or fashion can command, is pointed against us. The guns are shotted to their lips. The arrows are poisoned. Fighting against such an array, we cannot afford to confine ourselves to any one weapon. The cause is not ours, so that we might, rightfully, postpone or put in peril the victory by moderating our demands, stifling our convictions, or filing down our rebukes, to gratify any sickly taste of our own, or to spare the delicate nerves of our neighbor. Our clients are three millions of Christian slaves, standing dumb suppliants at the threshold of the Christian world. They have no voice but ours to utter their complaints, or to demand justice. The press, the pulpit, the wealth, the literature, the prejudices, the political arrangements, the present self-interest of the country, are all against us. God has given us no weapon but the truth, faithfully uttered, and addressed, with the old prophets' directness, to the conscience of the individual sinner. The elements which control public opinion and mold the masses are against us. We can but pick off here and there a man from the triumphant majority. We have facts for those who think, arguments for those who reason; but he who cannot be reasoned

out of his prejudices must be laughed out of them; he who cannot be argued out of his selfishness must be shamed out of it by the mirror of his hateful self held up relentlessly before his eyes. We live in a land where every man makes broad his phylactery, inscribing thereon, "All men are created equal"—"God hath made of one blood all nations of men." It seems to us that in such a land there must be, on this question of slavery, sluggards to be awakened, as well as doubters to be convinced. Many more, we verily believe, of the first than of the last. There are far more dead hearts to be quickened than confused intellects to be cleared up—more dumb dogs to be made to speak than doubting consciences to be enlightened. [Loud cheers.] We have use, then, sometimes, for something beside argument.

What is the denunciation with which we are charged? It is endeavoring, in our faltering human speech, to declare the enormity of the sin of making merchandise of men—of separating husband and wife, taking the infant from its mother, and selling the daughter to prostitution—of a professedly Christian nation denying, by statute, the Bible to every sixth man and woman of its population, and making it illegal for "two or three" to meet together, except a white man be present! What is this harsh criticism of motives with which we are charged? It is simply holding the intelligent and deliberate actor responsible for the character and consequences of his acts. Is there anything inherently wrong in such denunciation or such criticism? This we may claim —we have never judged a man but out of his own mouth. We have seldom, if ever, held him to account, except for acts of which he and his own friends were proud. All that we ask the world and thoughtful men to note are the principles and deeds on which the American pulpit and American public men plume themselves. We always allow our opponents to paint their own pictures. Our humble duty is to stand by and assure the spectators that what they would take for a knave or a hypocrite is really, in American estimation, a Doctor of Divinity or Secretary of State.*

* A paragraph from the *New England Farmer*, of this city, has gone the rounds of the press, and is generally believed. It says:

> We learn, on reliable authority, that Mr. Webster confessed to a warm political friend, a short time before his death, that the great mistake of

The South is one great brothel, where half a million of women are flogged to prostitution, or, worse still, are degraded to believe it honorable. The public squares of half our great cities echo to the wail of families torn asunder at the auction block; no one of our fair rivers that has not closed over the Negro seeking in death a refuge from a life too wretched to bear; thousands of fugitives skulk along our highways, afraid to tell their names, and trembling at the sight of a human being; free men are kidnaped in

his life was the famous Seventh of March Speech, in which, it will be remembered, he defended the Fugitive Slave Law, and fully committed himself to the Compromise Measures. Before taking his stand on that occasion, he is said to have corresponded with Professor Stuart, and other eminent divines, to ascertain how far the religious sentiment of the North would sustain him in the position he was about to assume.

Some say this "warm political friend" was a clergyman! Consider a moment the language of this statement, the form it takes on every lip and in every press. "The great *mistake* of his life"! Seventy years old, brought up in New England churches, with all the culture of the world at his command, his soul melted by the repeated loss of those dearest to him, a great statesman, with a heart, according to his admirers, yet tender and fresh—one who bent in such agony over the deathbed of his first daughter—he looks back on this speech, which his friends say changed the feelings of ten millions of people, and made it possible to enact and execute the Fugitive Slave Law. He sees that it flooded the hearthstones of thousands of colored men with wretchedness and despair—crazed the mother, and broke the heart of the wife, putting the virtue of woman and the liberty of man in the power of the vilest—and all, as he at least now saw, for nothing. Yet one who, according to his worshipers, was "the grandest growth of our soil and our institutions," looked back on such an act, and said—what? With one foot in the grave, said what of it? "I did wrong"? "I committed a foul outrage on my brother man"? "I sported too carelessly with the welfare of the poor"? Was there no moral chord in that heart, "the grandest growth of our soil and our institutions"? No! He said, "I made a mistake!" Not, "I was false in my stewardship of these great talents and this high position!" No! But on the chessboard of the political game, I made a bad move! I threw away my chances! A gambler, I did not understand my cards! And to whom does he offer this acknowledgment? To a clergyman! the representative of the moral sense of the community! What a picture! We laugh at the lack of heart in Talleyrand, when he says, "It is worse than a crime, a blunder." Yet all our New Englander can call this momentous crime of his life is—a *mistake!*

Whether this statement be entirely true or not, we all know it is exactly the tone in which all about us talk of that speech. If the statement be true, what an entire want of right feeling and moral sensibility it shows in Mr. Webster! If it be unfounded, still the welcome it has received, and the ready belief it has gained, show the popular appreciation of him, and of such a crime. Such is the public with which Abolitionists have to deal.

our streets, to be plunged into that hell of slavery; and now and then one, as if by miracle, after long years, returns to make men aghast with his tale. The press says, "It is all right"; and the pulpit cries, "Amen." They print the Bible in every tongue in which man utters his prayers; and get the money to do so by agreeing never to give the book, in the language our mothers taught us, to any Negro, free or bond, south of Mason and Dixon's line. The press says, "It is all right"; and the pulpit cries, "Amen." The slave lifts up his imploring eyes, and sees in every face but ours the face of an enemy. Prove to me now that harsh rebuke, indignant denunciation, scathing sarcasm, and pitiless ridicule are wholly and always unjustifiable; else we dare not, in so desperate a case, throw away any weapon which ever broke up the crust of an ignorant prejudice, roused a slumbering conscience, shamed a proud sinner, or changed, in any way, the conduct of a human being. Our aim is to alter public opinion. Did we live in a market, our talk should be of dollars and cents, and we would seek to prove only that slavery was an unprofitable investment. Were the nation one great, pure church, we would sit down and reason of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Had slavery fortified itself in a college, we would load our cannons with cold facts, and wing our arrows with arguments. But we happen to live in the world—the world made up of thought and impulse, of self-conceit and self-interest, of weak men and wicked. To conquer, we must reach all. Our object is not to make every man a Christian or a philosopher, but to induce everyone to aid in the abolition of slavery. We expect to accomplish our object long before the nation is made over into saints or elevated into philosophers. To change public opinion, we use the very tools by which it was formed. That is, all such as an honest man may touch.

All this I am not only ready to allow, but I should be ashamed to think of the slave, or to look into the face of my fellow man, if it were otherwise. It is the only thing which justifies us to our own consciences, and makes us able to say we have done, or at least tried to do, our duty.

So far, however you distrust my philosophy, you will not doubt my statements. That we have denounced and rebuked with un-

sparing fidelity will not be denied. Have we not also addressed ourselves to that other duty, of arguing our question thoroughly? —of using due discretion and fair sagacity in endeavoring to promote our cause? Yes, we have. Every statement we have made has been doubted. Every principle we have laid down has been denied by overwhelming majorities against us. No one step has ever been gained but by the most laborious research and the most exhausting argument. And no question has ever, since Revolutionary days, been so thoroughly investigated or argued here, as that of slavery. Of that research and that argument, of the whole of it, the old-fashioned, fanatical, crazy Garrisonian antislavery movement has been the author. From this band of men has proceeded every important argument or idea which has been broached on the antislavery question from 1830 to the present time. I am well aware of the extent of the claim I make. I recognize, as fully as any one can, the ability of the new laborers —the eloquence and genius with which they have recommended this cause to the nation, and flashed conviction home on the conscience of the community. I do not mean, either, to assert that they have in every instance borrowed from our treasury their facts and arguments. Left to themselves, they would probably have looked up the one and originated the other. As a matter of fact, however, they have generally made use of the materials collected to their hands. But there are some persons about us, sympathizers to a great extent with "Ion," who pretend that the antislavery movement has been hitherto mere fanaticism, its only weapon angry abuse. They are obliged to assert this, in order to justify their past indifference or hostility. At present, when it suits their purpose to give it some attention, they endeavor to explain the change by alleging that now it has been taken up by men of thoughtful minds, and its claims are urged by fair discussion and able argument. My claim, then, is this: that neither the charity of the most timid of sects, the sagacity of our wisest converts, nor the culture of the ripest scholars, though all have been aided by our twenty years' experience, has yet struck out any new method of reaching the public mind, or originated any new argument or train of thought, or discovered any new fact bearing on the question. When once brought fully into the struggle, they

have found it necessary to adopt the same means, to rely on the same arguments, to hold up the same men and the same measures to public reprobation, with the same bold rebuke and unsparing invective that we have used. All their conciliatory bearing, their painstaking moderation, their constant and anxious endeavor to draw a broad line between their camp and ours, have been thrown away. Just so far as they have been effective laborers, they have found, as we have, their hands against every man, and every man's hand against them. The most experienced of them are ready to acknowledge that our plan has been wise, our course efficient, and that our unpopularity is no fault of ours, but flows necessarily and unavoidably from our position. "I should suspect," says old Fuller, "that his preaching had no salt in it, if no galled horse did wince." Our friends find, after all, that men do not so much hate us as the truth we utter and the light we bring. They find that the community are not the honest seekers after truth which they fancied, but selfish politicians and sectarian bigots, who shiver, like Alexander's butler, whenever the sun shines on them. Experience has driven these new laborers back to our method. We have no quarrel with them—would not steal one wreath of their laurels. All we claim is that if they are to be complimented as prudent, moderate, Christian, sagacious, statesmanlike reformers, we deserve the same praise; for they have done nothing that we, in our measure, did not attempt before.

I claim this, that the cause, in its recent aspect, has put on nothing but timidity. It has taken to itself no new weapons of recent years; it has become more compromising—that is all! It has become neither more persuasive, more learned, more Christian, more charitable, nor more effective than for the twenty years preceding. Mr. [John P.] Hale, the head of the Free Soil movement, after a career in the Senate that would do honor to any man—after a six years' course which entitles him to the respect and confidence of the antislavery public—can put his name, within the last month, to an appeal from the city of Washington, signed by a Houston and a Cass, for a monument to be raised to Henry Clay! If that be the test of charity and courtesy, we cannot give it to the world. [Loud cheers.] Some of the leaders of the Free Soil Party of Massachusetts, after exhausting the whole

capacity of our language to paint the treachery of Daniel Webster to the cause of liberty, and the evil they thought he was able and seeking to do—after that, could feel it in their hearts to parade themselves in the funeral procession got up to do him honor! In this we allow we cannot follow them. The deference which every gentleman owes to the proprieties of social life, that self-respect and regard to consistency which is every man's duty—these, if no deeper feelings, will ever prevent us from giving such proofs of this newly invented Christian courtesy. [Great cheering.] We do not *play* politics; antislavery is no half jest with us; it is a terrible earnest, with life or death, worse than life or death, on the issue. It is no lawsuit, where it matters not to the good feeling of opposing counsel which way the verdict goes, and where advocates can shake hands after the decision as pleasantly as before. When we think of such a man as Henry Clay, his long life, his mighty influence cast always into the scale against the slave, of that irresistible fascination with which he molded everyone to his will; when we remember that, his conscience acknowledging the justice of our cause, and his heart open on every side to the gentlest impulses, he could sacrifice so remorsely his convictions and the welfare of millions to his low ambition; when we think how the slave trembled at the sound of his voice, and that from a multitude of breaking hearts there went up nothing but gratitude to God when it pleased him to call that great sinner from this world, we cannot find it in our hearts, we could not shape our lips to ask any man to do him honor. [Great sensation.] No amount of eloquence, no sheen of official position, no loud grief of partisan friends, would ever lead us to ask monuments or walk in fine processions for pirates; and the sectarian zeal or selfish ambition which gives up, deliberately and in full knowledge of the facts, three millions of human beings to hopeless ignorance, daily robbery, systematic prostitution, and murder, which the law is neither able nor undertakes to prevent or avenge, is more monstrous, in our eyes, than the love of gold which takes a score of lives with merciful quickness on the high seas. Haynau on the Danube is no more hateful to us than Haynau on the Potomac. Why give mobs to one, and monuments to the other?

If these things be necessary to courtesy, I cannot claim that we

are courteous. We seek only to be honest men, and speak the same of the dead as of the living. If the grave that hides their bodies could swallow also the evil they have done and the example they leave, we might enjoy at least the luxury of forgetting them. But the evil that men do lives after them, and example acquires tenfold authority when it speaks from the grave. History, also, is to be written. How shall a feeble minority, without weight or influence in the country, with no jury of millions to appeal to—denounced, vilified, and contemned—how shall we make way against the overwhelming weight of some colossal reputation, if we do not turn from the idolatrous present, and appeal to the human race, saying to your idols of today, "Here we are defeated; but we will write our judgment with the iron pen of a century to some, and it shall never be forgotten, if we can help it, that you were false in your generation to the claims of the slave!" [Loud cheers.]

At present, our leading men, strong in the support of large majorities, and counting safely on the prejudices of the community, can afford to despise us. They know they can overawe or cajole the Present; their only fear is the judgment of the Future. Strange fear, perhaps, considering how short and local their fame! But however little, it is their all. Our only hold upon them is the thought of that bar of posterity, before which we are all to stand. Thank God! there is the elder brother of the Saxon race across the water, there is the army of honest men to come! Before that jury we summon you. We are weak here—outtalked, outvoted. You load our names with infamy, and shout us down. But our words bide their time. We warn the living that we have terrible memories, and that their sins are never to be forgotten. We will gibbet the name of every apostate so black and high that his children's children shall blush to bear it. Yet we bear no malice, cherish no resentment. We thank God that the love of fame, "that last infirmity of noble mind," is shared by the ignoble. In our necessity, we seize this weapon in the slave's behalf, and teach caution to the living by meting out relentless justice to the dead. How strange the change death produces in the way a man is talked about here! While leading men live, they avoid as much as possible all mention of slavery, from fear of being thought

abolitionists. The moment they are dead, their friends rake up every word they ever contrived to whisper in a corner for liberty, and parade it before the world; growing angry, all the while, with us, because we insist on explaining these chance expressions by the tenor of a long and base life. While drunk with the temptations of the present hour, men are willing to bow to any Moloch. When their friends bury them, they feel what bitter mockery, fifty years hence, any epitaph will be, if it cannot record of one living in this era some service rendered to the slave! These, Mr. Chairman, are the reasons why we take care that "the memory of the wicked shall rot."

I have claimed that the antislavery cause has, from the first, been ably and dispassionately argued, every objection candidly examined, and every difficulty or doubt anywhere honestly entertained treated with respect. Let me glance at the literature of the cause, and try not so much, in a brief hour, to prove this assertion, as to point out the sources from which anyone may satisfy himself of its truth.

I will begin with certainly the ablest and perhaps the most honest statesman who has ever touched the slave question. Any one who will examine John Quincy Adams's speech on Texas, in 1838, will see that he was only seconding the full and able exposure of the Texas plot, prepared by Benjamin Lundy,* to one of whose pamphlets Dr. Channing, in his "Letter to Henry Clay," has confessed his obligation. Everyone acquainted with those years will allow that the North owes its earliest knowledge and first awakening on that subject to Mr. Lundy, who made long journeys and devoted years to the investigation. His labors have this attestation, that they quickened the zeal and strengthened the hands of such men as Adams and Channing. I have been told that Mr. Lundy prepared a brief for Mr. Adams, and furnished him the materials for his speech on Texas.

Look next at the right of petition. Long before any member of Congress had opened his mouth in its defense, the abolition presses and lecturers had examined and defended the limits of

* Benjamin Lundy (1789-1839), one of the great antislavery pioneers; a moderate who introduced Garrison into the movement. Lundy edited *The Genius of Universal Emancipation,* among other antislavery services. [Ed.]

this right with profound historical research and eminent constitutional ability. So thoroughly had the work been done that all classes of the people had made up their minds about it long before any speaker of eminence had touched it in Congress. The politicians were little aware of this. When Mr. Adams threw himself so gallantly into the breach, it is said he wrote anxiously home to know whether he would be supported in Massachusetts, little aware of the outburst of popular gratitude which the Northern breeze was even then bringing him, deep and cordial enough to wipe away the old grudge Massachusetts had borne him so long. Mr. Adams himself was only in favor of receiving the petitions, and advised to refuse their prayer, which was the abolition of slavery in the District. He doubted the power of Congress to abolish. His doubts were examined by Mr. William Goodell, in two letters of most acute logic, and of masterly ability. If Mr. Adams still retained his doubts, it is certain at least that he never expressed them afterward. When Mr. Clay paraded the same objections, the whole question of the power of Congress over the district was treated by Theodore D. Weld* in the fullest manner, and with the widest research—indeed, leaving nothing to be added: an argument which Dr. Channing characterized as "demonstration," and pronounced the essay "one of the ablest pamphlets from the American press." No answer was ever attempted. The best proof of its ability is that no one since has presumed to doubt the power. Lawyers and statesmen have tacitly settled down into its full acknowledgment.

The influence of the Colonization Society on the welfare of the colored race was the first question our movement encountered. To the close logic, eloquent appeals, and fully sustained charges of Mr. Garrison's Letters on that subject no answer was ever made. Judge [William] Jay followed with a work full and able, establishing every charge by the most patient investigation of facts. It is not too much to say of these two volumes, that they left the Colonization Society hopeless at the North. It dares never show its face before the people, and only lingers in some few

* One of the outstanding antislavery organizers, orators, and pamphleteers of the 1830s, he retired from the movement early in the next decade. [Ed.]

nooks of sectarian pride, so secluded from the influence of present ideas as to be almost fossil in their character.

The practical working of the slave system, the slave laws, the treatment of slaves, their food, the duration of their lives, their ignorance and moral condition, and the influence of Southern public opinion on their fate, have been spread out in a detail and with a fullness of evidence which no subject has ever received before in this country. Witness the works of Phelps, Bourne, Rankin, Grimké, the *Antislavery Record,* and, above all, that encyclopædia of facts and storehouse of arguments, the *Thousand Witnesses* of Mr. Theodore D. Weld. He also prepared that full and valuable tract for the World's Convention called, *Slavery and the Internal Slave-Trade in the United States,* published in London, 1841. Unique in antislavery literature is Mrs. [Lydia Maria] Child's *Appeal,* one of the ablest of our weapons, and one of the finest efforts of her rare genius.*

The *Princeton Review,* I believe, first challenged the abolitionists to an investigation of the teachings of the Bible on slavery. That field had been somewhat broken by our English predecessors. But in England, the proslavery party had been soon shamed out of the attempt to drag the Bible into their service, and hence the discussion there had been short and somewhat superficial. The proslavery side of the question has been eagerly sustained by theological reviews and doctors of divinity without number, from the halfway and timid faltering of Wayland up to the unblushing and melancholy recklessness of Stuart. The argument on the other side has come wholly from the abolitionists; for neither Dr. Hague nor Dr. Barnes can be said to have added anything to the wide research, critical acumen, and comprehensive views of Theodore D. Weld, Beriah Green, J. G. Fee, and the old work of [Reverend James] Duncan.

* Phelps, Bourne, and Rankin were antislavery churchmen and pioneers. The Grimké sisters caused a sensation by abandoning their famous South Carolina slave-holding family in order to testify against slavery in the North. Their example gave an impetus to the woman's rights movement. Angelina Grimké married Theodore D. Weld. Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) in 1833 gave up her status as a successful author to join the Garrison forces, as writer and editor. Her *Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833) made valuable converts to abolitionism. [Ed.]

On the constitutional questions which have at various times arisen—the citizenship of the colored man, the soundness of the "Prigg" decision, the constitutionality of the old Fugitive Slave Law, the true construction of the slave-surrender clause—nothing has been added, either in the way of fact or argument, to the works of Jay, Weld, Alvan Stewart, E. G. Loring, S. E. Sewall, Richard Hildreth, W. I. Bowditch, the masterly essays of the *Emancipator* at New York and the *Liberator* at Boston, and the various addresses of the Massachusetts and American Societies for the last twenty years. The idea of the antislavery character of the Constitution—the opiate with which Free Soil quiets its conscience for voting under a proslavery government—I heard first suggested by Mr. Garrison in 1838. It was elaborately argued that year in all our antislavery gatherings, both here and in New York, and sustained with great ability by Alvan Stewart, and in part by T. D. Weld. The antislavery construction of the Constitution was ably argued in 1836, in the *Antislavery Magazine,* by Reverend Samuel J. May, one of the very first to seek the side of Mr. Garrison, and pledge to the slave his life and efforts—a pledge which thirty years of devoted labors have nobly redeemed. If it has either merit or truth, they are due to no legal learning recently added to our ranks, but to some of the old and well-known pioneers. This claim has since received the fullest investigation from Mr. Lysander Spooner, who has urged it with all his unrivaled ingenuity, laborious research, and close logic. He writes as a lawyer, and has no wish, I believe, to be ranked with any class of antislavery men.

The influence of slavery on our government has received the profoundest philosophical investigation from the pen of Richard Hildreth, in his invaluable essay on *Despotism in America,* a work which deserves a place by the side of the ablest political disquisitions of any age.

Mrs. Chapman's survey of *Ten Years of Antislavery Experience* was the first attempt at a philosophical discussion of the various aspects of the antislavery cause, and the problems raised by its struggles with sect and party. You, Mr. Chairman [Edmund Quincy, Esq.], in the elaborate Reports of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society for the last ten years, have followed in the same

path, making to American literature a contribution of the highest value, and in a department where you have few rivals and no superior. Whoever shall write the history either of this movement, or any other attempted under a republican government, will find nowhere else so clear an insight and so full an acquaintance with the most difficult part of his subject.

Even the vigorous mind of [Robert] Rantoul, the ablest man, without doubt, of the Democratic Party, and perhaps the ripest politician in New England, added little or nothing to the storehouse of antislavery argument. The grasp of his intellect and the fullness of his learning everyone will acknowledge. He never trusted himself to speak on any subject till he had dug down to its primal granite. He laid a most generous contribution on the altar of the antislavery cause. His speeches on our question, too short and too few, are remarkable for their compact statement, iron logic, bold denunciation, and the wonderful light thrown back upon our history. Yet how little do they present which was not familiar for years in our antislavery meetings!

Look, too, at the last great effort of the idol of so many thousands, Mr. Senator [Charles] Sumner—the discussion of a great national question, of which it has been said that we must go back to Webster's Reply to Hayne, and Fisher Ames on the Jay Treaty, to find its equal in Congress—praise which we might perhaps qualify, if any adequate report were left us of some of the noble orations of Adams. No one can be blind to the skillful use he had made of his materials, the consummate ability with which he has marshaled them, and the radiant glow which his genius has thrown over all. Yet, with the exception of his reference to the antislavery debate in Congress, in 1817, there is hardly a train of thought or argument, and no single fact in the whole speech, which has not been familiar in our meetings and essays for the last ten years.

Before leaving the halls of Congress, I have great pleasure in recognizing one exception to my remarks, Mr. [Joshua R.] Giddings. Perhaps he is no real exception, since it would not be difficult to establish his claim to be considered one of the original Abolition Party. But whether he would choose to be so considered or not, it is certainly true that his long presence at the

seat of government, his whole-souled devotedness, his sagacity and unwearied industry, have made him a large contributor to our antislavery resources.

The relations of the American Church to slavery, and the duties of private Christians—the whole casuistry of this portion of the question, so momentous among descendants of the Puritans —have been discussed with great acuteness and rare common sense by Messrs. Garrison, Goodell, Gerrit Smith, [Parker] Pillsbury, and [Stephen S.] Foster. They have never attempted to judge the American Church by any standard except that which she has herself laid down, never claimed that she should be perfect, but have contented themselves by demanding that she should be consistent. They have never judged her except out of her own mouth, and on facts asserted by her own presses and leaders. The sundering of the Methodist and Baptist denominations, and the universal agitation of the religious world, are the best proof of the sagacity with which their measures have been chosen, the cogent arguments they have used, and the indisputable facts on which their criticisms have been founded.

In nothing have the abolitionists shown more sagacity or more thorough knowledge of their countrymen than in the course they have pursued in relation to the Church. None but a New Englander can appreciate the power which church organizations wield over all who share the blood of the Puritans. The influence of each sect over its own members is overwhelming, often shutting out, or controlling, all other influences. We have popes here, all the more dangerous because no triple crown puts you on your guard. The Methodist priesthood brings the Catholic very vividly to mind. That each local church is independent of all others, we have been somewhat careful to assert, in theory and practice. The individual's independence of all organizations which place themselves between him and his God, some few bold minds have asserted in theory, but most even of those have stopped there.

In such a land, the abolitionists early saw, that, for a moral question like theirs, only two paths lay open: to work through the Church, that failing, to join battle with it. Some tried long, like Luther, to be Protestants, and yet not come out of Catholicism; but their eyes were soon opened. Since then we have been con-

vinced that to come out from the Church, to hold her up as the bulwark of slavery, and to make her shortcomings the main burden of our appeals to the religious sentiment of the community, was our first duty and best policy. This course alienated many friends, and was a subject of frequent rebuke from such men as Dr. Channing. But nothing has ever more strengthened the cause, or won it more influence; and it has had the healthiest effect on the Church itself. British Christians have always sanctioned it, whenever the case has been fairly presented to them. Mr. John Quincy Adams, a man far better acquainted with his own times than Dr. Channing, recognized the soundness of our policy. I do not know that he ever uttered a word in public on the delinquency of the churches; but he is said to have assured his son, at the time the Methodist Church broke asunder, that other men might be more startled by the *éclat* of political success, but nothing, in his opinion, promised more good, or showed more clearly the real strength of the antislavery movement, than that momentous event.

In 1838, the British Emancipation in the West Indies opened a rich field for observation, and a full harvest of important facts. The abolitionists, not willing to wait for the official reports of the government, sent special agents through those islands, whose reports they scattered, at great expense and by great exertion, broadcast through the land. This was at a time when no newspaper in the country would either lend or sell them the aid of its columns to enlighten the nation on an experiment so vitally important to us. And even now, hardly a press in the country cares or dares to bestow a line or communicate a fact toward the history of that remarkable revolution. The columns of the *Antislavery Standard, Pennsylvania Freeman,* and *Ohio Bugle* have been for years full of all that a thorough and patient advocacy of our cause demands. And the eloquent lips of many whom I see around me, and whom I need not name here, have done their share toward pressing all these topics on public attention. There is hardly any record of these labors of the living voice. Indeed, from the nature of the case, there cannot be any adequate one. Yet, unable to command a wide circulation for our books and journals, we have been obliged to bring ourselves into close con-

tact with the people, and to rely mainly on public addresses. These have been our most efficient instrumentality. For proof that these addresses have been full of pertinent facts, sound sense, and able arguments, we must necessarily point to results, and demand to be tried by our fruits. Within these last twenty years it has been very rare that any fact stated by your lecturers has been disproved, or any statement of theirs successfully impeached. And for evidence of the soundness, simplicity, and pertinency of their arguments we can only claim that our converts and co-laborers throughout the land have at least the reputation of being specially able "to give a reason for the faith that is in them."

I remember that when, in 1845, the present leaders of the Free Soil party, with Daniel Webster in their company, met to draw up the Anti-Texas Address of the Massachusetts Convention, they sent to abolitionists for antislavery facts and history, for the remarkable testimonies of our Revolutionary great men which they wished to quote. [Hear! hear!] When, many years ago, the Legislature of Massachusetts wished to send to Congress a resolution affirming the duty of immediate emancipation, the committee sent to William Lloyd Garrison to draw it up, and it stands now on our statute book as he drafted it.

How vigilantly, how patiently, did we watch the Texas plot from its commencement! The politic South felt that its first move had been too bold, and thenceforward worked underground. For many a year, men laughed at us for entertaining any apprehensions. It was impossible to rouse the North to its peril. David Lee Child* was thought crazy, because he would not believe there was no danger. His elaborate *Letters on Texan Annexation* are the ablest and most valuable contribution that has been made toward a history of the whole plot. Though we foresaw and proclaimed our conviction that annexation would be, in the end, a fatal step for the South, we did not feel at liberty to relax our opposition, well knowing the vast increase of strength it would give, at first, to the Slave Power. I remember being one of a committee which waited on Abbott Lawrence,** a year or so only

* Husband and co-worker of Lydia Maria Child, and a remarkable abolitionist in his own right. [Ed.]

** Wealthy businessman and Whig politician. [Ed.]

before annexation, to ask his countenance to some general movement, without distinction of party, against the Texas scheme. He smiled at our fears, begged us to have no apprehensions; stating that his correspondence with leading men at Washington enabled him to assure us annexation was impossible, and that the South itself was determined to defeat the project. A short time after, Senators and Representatives from Texas took their seats in Congress!

Many of these services to the slave were done before I joined his cause. In thus referring to them, do not suppose me merely seeking occasion of eulogy on my predecessors and present co-laborers. I recall these things only to rebut the contemptuous criticism which some about us make the excuse for their past neglect of the movement, and in answer to "Ion's" representation of our course as reckless fanaticism, childish impatience, utter lack of good sense, and of our meetings as scenes only of excitement, of reckless and indiscriminate denunciation. I assert that every social, moral, economical, religious, political, and historical aspect of the question has been ably and patiently examined. And all this has been done with an industry and ability which have left little for the professional skill, scholarly culture, and historical learning of the new laborers to accomplish. If the people are still in doubt, it is from the inherent difficulty of the subject, or a hatred of light, not from want of it.

So far from the antislavery cause having lacked a manly and able discussion, I think it will be acknowledged hereafter that this discussion has been one of the noblest contributions to a literature really American. Heretofore, not only has our tone been but an echo of foreign culture, but the very topics discussed and the views maintained have been too often pale reflections of European politics and European philosophy. No matter what dress we assumed, the voice was ever "the voice of Jacob." At last we have stirred a question thoroughly American; the subject has been looked at from a point of view entirely American; and it is of such deep interest, that it has called out all the intellectual strength of the nation. For once, the nation speaks its own thoughts, in its own language, and the tone also is all its own. It

will hardly do for the defeated party to claim that, in this discussion, all the ability is on their side.

We are charged with lacking foresight, and said to exaggerate. This charge of exaggeration brings to my mind a fact I mentioned, last month, at Horticultural Hall. The theatres in many of our large cities bring out, night after night, all the radical doctrines and all the startling scenes of *Uncle Tom*. They preach immediate emancipation, and slaves shoot their hunters to loud applause. Two years ago, sitting in this hall, I was myself somewhat startled by the assertion of my friend, Mr. Pillsbury, that the theatres would receive the gospel of antislavery truth earlier than the churches. A hiss went up from the galleries, and many in the audience were shocked by the remark. I asked myself whether I could endorse such a statement, and felt that I could not. I could not believe it to be true. Only two years have passed, and what was then deemed rant and fanaticism, by seven out of ten who heard it, has proved true. The theatre, bowing to its audience, has preached immediate emancipation, and given us the whole of *Uncle Tom;* while the pulpit is either silent or hostile, and in the columns of the theological papers the work is subjected to criticism, to reproach, and its author to severe rebuke. Do not, therefore, friends, set down as extravagant every statement which your experience does not warrant. It may be that you and I have not studied the signs of the times quite as accurately as the speaker. Going up and down the land, coming into close contact with the feelings and prejudices of the community, he is sometimes a better judge than you are of its present state. An abolitionist has more motives for watching and more means of finding out the true state of public opinion, than most of those careless critics who jeer at his assertions today, and are the first to cry, "Just what *I* said," when his prophecy becomes fact tomorrow.

Mr. "Ion" thinks, also, that we have thrown away opportunities, and needlessly outraged the men and parties about us. Far from it. The antislavery movement was a patient and humble suppliant at every door whence any help could possibly be hoped. If we now repudiate and denounce some of our institutions, it is because we have faithfully tried them, and found them deaf to the

claims of justice and humanity. Our great leader, when he first meditated this crusade, did not

At once, like a sunburst, his banner unfurl.

O no! he sounded his way warily forward. Brought up in the strictest reverence for church organizations, his first effort was to enlist the clergymen of Boston in the support of his views. On their aid he counted confidently in his effort to preach immediate repentance of all sin. He did not go, with *malice prepense,* as some seem to imagine, up to that "attic" where Mayor Otis with difficulty found him. He did not court hostility or seek exile. He did not sedulously endeavor to cut himself off from the sympathy and countenance of the community about him. O no! A fervid disciple of the American Church, he conferred with some of the leading clergy of the city, and laid before them his convictions on the subject of slavery. He painted their responsibility, and tried to induce them to take from his shoulders the burden of so mighty a movement. He laid himself at their feet. He recognized the colossal strength of the clergy; he knew that against their opposition it would be almost desperate to attempt to relieve the slave. He entreated them, therefore, to take up the cause. But the clergy turned away from him! They shut their doors upon him! They bade him compromise his convictions, smother one half of them, and support the colonization movement, making his own auxiliary to that, or they would have none of him. Like Luther, he said: "Here I stand; God help me; I can do nothing else!" But the men who joined him were not persuaded that the case was so desperate. They returned, each to his own local sect, and remained in them until some of us, myself among the number—later converts to the antislavery movement —thought they were slow and faltering in their obedience to conscience, and that they ought to have cut loose much sooner than they did. But a patience, which old sympathies would not allow to be exhausted, and associations, planted deeply in youth, and spreading over a large part of manhood, were too strong for any mere argument to dislodge them. So they still persisted in remaining in the Church. Their zeal was so fervent, and their

labors so abundant, that in some towns large societies were formed, led by most of the clergymen, and having almost all the church members on their lists. In those same towns now you will not find one single abolitionist, of any stamp whatever. They excuse their falling back by alleging that we have injured the cause by our extravagance and denunciation, and by the various other questions with which our names are associated. This might be a good reason why they should not work with us, but does it excuse their not working at all? . . .

At the outset, Mr. Garrison called on the head of the Orthodox denomination—a man compared with whose influence on the mind of New England that of the statesman whose death you have just mourned was, I think, but as dust in the balance—a man who then held the Orthodoxy of Boston in his right hand, and who has since taken up the West by its four corners, and given it so largely to Puritanism—I mean the Reverend Dr. Lyman Beecher. Mr. Garrison was one of those who bowed to the spell of that matchless eloquence which then fulmined over our Zion. He waited on his favorite divine, and urged him to give to the new movement the incalculable aid of his name and countenance. He was patiently heard. He was allowed to unfold his plans and array his facts. The reply of the veteran was, "Mr. Garrison, I have too many irons in the fire to put in another." My friend said, "Doctor, you had better take them all out and put this one in, if you mean well either to the religion or to the civil liberty of our country."

The great Orthodox leader did not rest with merely refusing to put another iron in his fire; he attempted to limit the irons of other men. As president of Lane Theological Seminary, he endeavored to prevent the students from investigating the subject of slavery. The result, we all remember, was a strenuous resistance on the part of a large number of the students, led by that remarkable man, Theodore D. Weld. The right triumphed, and Lane Seminary lost her character and noblest pupils at the same time. She has languished ever since, even with such a president. Why should I follow Dr. Beecher into those ecclesiastical conventions where he has been tried, and found wanting, in fidelity to the slave? He has done no worse, indeed he has done much

better, than most of his class. His opposition has always been open and manly.

But, Mr. Chairman, there is something in the blood which, men tell us, brings out virtues and defects, even when they have lain dormant for a generation. Good and evil qualities are hereditary, the physicians say. The blood whose warm currents of eloquent aid my friend solicited in vain in that generation has sprung voluntarily to his assistance in the next—both from the pulpit and the press—to rouse the world by the vigor and pathos of its appeals. [Enthusiastic cheers.] Even on that great triumph I would say a word. Marked and unequaled as has been that success, remember, in explanation of the phenomenon—for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is rather an event than a book—remember this: if the old antislavery movement had not roused the sympathies of Mrs. Stowe, the book had never been written; if that movement had not raised up hundreds of thousands of hearts to sympathize with the slave, the book had never been read. Not that the genius of the author has not made the triumph all her own; not that the unrivaled felicity of its execution has not trebled, quadrupled, increased tenfold, if you please, the number of readers; but there must be a spot even for Archimedes to rest his lever upon, before he can move the world, and this effort of genius, consecrated to the noblest purpose, might have fallen dead and unnoticed in 1835. It is the antislavery movement which has changed 1835 to 1852. Those of us familiar with antislavery literature know well that Richard Hildreth's *Archy Moore,* now *The White Slave,* was a book of eminent ability; that it owed its want of success to no lack of genius, but only to the fact that it was a work born out of due time; that the antislavery cause had not then aroused sufficient numbers, on the wings of whose enthusiasm even the most delightful fiction could have risen into world-wide influence and repute. To the cause which had changed 1835 to 1852 is due somewhat of the influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

The abolitionists have never overlooked the wonderful power which the wand of the novelist was yet to wield in their behalf over the hearts of the world. Fredrika Bremer only expressed the common sentiment of many of us, when she declared that "the fate of the Negro is the romance of our history." Again and again,

from my earliest knowledge of the cause, have I heard the opinion, that in the debatable land between Freedom and Slavery, in the thrilling incidents of the escape and sufferings of the fugitive, and the perils of his friends, the future Walter Scott of America would find the "borderland" of his romance, and the most touching incidents of his "sixty years since"; and that the literature of America would gather its freshest laurels from that field.

So much, Mr. Chairman, for our treatment of the Church. We clung to it as long as we hoped to make it useful. Disappointed in that, we have tried to expose its paltering and hypocrisy on this question, broadly and with unflinching boldness, in hopes to purify and bring it to our aid. Our labors with the great religious societies, with the press, with the institutions of learning, have been as untiring, and almost as unsuccessful. We have tried to do our duty to every public question that has arisen, which could be made serviceable in rousing general attention. The Right of Petition, the Power of Congress, the Internal Slave-Trade, Texas, the Compromise Measures, the Fugitive Slave Law, the motions of leading men, the tactics of parties, have all been watched and used with sagacity and effect as means to produce a change in public opinion. Dr. Channing has thanked the Abolition Party, in the name of all the lovers of free thought and free speech, for having vindicated that right, when all others seemed ready to surrender it—vindicated it at the cost of reputation, ease, property, even life itself. The only blood that has ever been shed, on this side the ocean, in defense of the freedom of the press, was the blood of Lovejoy, one of their number. In December, 1836, Dr. Channing spoke of their position in these terms:

> Whilst, in obedience to conscience, they have refrained from opposing force to force, they have still persevered, amidst menace and insult, in bearing their testimony against wrong, in giving utterance to their deep convictions. Of such men, I do not hesitate to say, that they have rendered to freedom a more essential service than any body of men among us. The defenders of freedom are not those who claim and exercise rights which no one assails, or who win shouts of applause by well-turned compliments to Liberty in the days of her triumph. They are those who stand up for rights which mobs, conspiracies, or single tyrants put in jeopardy; who contend for Liberty in that particular form which is threatened at the moment by the many or the few.

To the abolitionists this honor belongs. The first systematic effort to strip the citizen of freedom of speech they have met with invincible resolution. From my heart I thank them. I am myself their debtor. I am not sure that I should this moment write in safety, had they shrunk from the conflict, had they shut their lips, imposed silence on their presses, and hid themselves before their ferocious assailants. . . .

Sir, when a nation sets itself to do evil, and all its leading forces, wealth, party, and piety, join in the career, it is impossible but that those who offer a constant opposition should be hated and maligned, no matter how wise, cautious, and well planned their course may be. We are peculiar sufferers in this way. The community has come to hate its reproving Nathan so bitterly, that even those whom the relenting part of it is beginning to regard as standard-bearers of the antislavery host think it unwise to avow any connection or sympathy with him. I refer to some of the leaders of the political movement against slavery. They feel it to be their mission to marshal and use as effectively as possible the present convictions of the people. They cannot afford to encumber themselves with the odium which twenty years of angry agitation have engendered in great sects sore from unsparing rebuke, parties galled by constant defeat, and leading men provoked by unexpected exposure. They are willing to confess, privately, that our movement produced theirs, and that its continued existence is the very breath of their life. But, at the same time, they would fain walk on the road without being soiled by too close contact with the rough pioneers who threw it up. They are wise and honorable, and their silence is very expressive.

When I speak of their eminent position and acknowledged ability, another thought strikes me. Who converted these men and their distinguished associates? It is said we have shown neither sagacity in plans, nor candor in discussion, nor ability. Who, then, or what, converted Burlingame and Wilson, Sumner and Adams, Palfrey and Mann, Chase and Hale, and Phillips and Giddings?* Who taught the *Christian Register,* the *Daily*

* Anson Burlingame, Henry Wilson, and John G. Palfrey were outstanding Free Soilers, Salmon P. Chase, John P. Hale, and Joshua R. Giddings more deeply involved with active abolitionists. Horace Mann, famous as an educational reformer, succeeded John Quincy Adams in Congress, following Adams's death in 1848. In 1852, Mann accepted the presidency of Antioch College.

Advertiser, and that class of prints, that there were such things as a slave and a slaveholder in the land, and so gave them some more intelligent basis than their mere instincts to hate William Lloyd Garrison? [Shouts and laughter.] What magic wand was it whose touch made the toadying servility of the land start up the real demon that it was, and at the same time gathered into the slave's service the professional ability, ripe culture, and personal integrity which grace the Free Soil ranks? We never argue! These men, then, were converted by simple denunciation! They were all converted by the "hot," "reckless," "ranting," "bigoted," "fanatic" Garrison, who never troubled himself about facts, nor stopped to argue with an opponent, but straightway knocked him down! [Roars of laughter and cheers.] My old and valued friend, Mr. Sumner, often boasts that he was a reader of the *Liberator* before I was. Do not criticize too much the agency by which such men were converted. That blade has a double edge. Our reckless course, our empty rant, our fanaticism, has made abolitionists of some of the best and ablest men in the land. We are inclined to go on, and see if even with such poor tools we cannot make some more. [Enthusiastic applause.] Antislavery zeal and the roused conscience of the "godless come-outers" made the trembling South demand the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Fugitive Slave Law "provoked" Mrs. Stowe to the good work of *Uncle Tom.* That is something! Let me say, in passing, that you will nowhere find an earlier or more generous appreciation, or more flowing eulogy, of these men and their labors, than in the columns of the *Liberator.* No one, however feeble, has ever peeped or muttered, in any quarter, that the vigilant eye of the Pioneer has not recognized him. He has stretched out the right hand of a most cordial welcome the moment any man's face was turned Zionward. [Loud cheers.]

I do not mention these things to praise Mr. Garrison, I do not stand here for that purpose. You will not deny—if you do, I can prove it—that the movement of the abolitionists converted these men. Their constituents were converted by it. The assault upon the right of petition, upon the right to print and speak of slavery, the denial of the right of Congress over the District, the annexation of Texas, the Fugitive Slave Law, were measures which the

antislavery movement provoked, and the discussion of which has made all the abolitionists we have. The antislavery cause, then, converted these men; it gave them a constituency; it gave them an opportunity to speak, and it gave them a public to listen. The antislavery cause gave them their votes, got them their offices, furnished them their facts, gave them their audience. If you tell me they cherished all these principles in their own breasts before Mr. Garrison appeared, I can only say, if the antislavery movement did not give them their ideas, it surely gave the courage to utter them.

In such circumstances, is it not singular that the name of William Lloyd Garrison has never been pronounced on the floor of the United States Congress linked with any epithet but that of contempt! No one of those men who owe their ideas, their station, their audience, to him, have ever thought it worth their while to utter one word in grateful recognition of the power which called them into being. When obliged, by the course of their argument, to treat the question historically, they can go across the water to Clarkson and Wilberforce—yes, to a safe salt-water distance. [Laughter.] As Daniel Webster, when he was talking to the farmers of western New York, and wished to contrast slave labor and free labor, did not dare to compare New York with Virginia—sister States, under the same government, planted by the same race, worshiping at the same altar, speaking the same language—identical in all respects, save that one in which he wished to seek the contrast; but no; he compared it with Cuba [cheers and laughter]—the contrast was so close! [Renewed cheers.] Catholic—Protestant; Spanish—Saxon; despotism —municipal institutions; readers of Lope de Vega and of Shakespeare; mutterers of the Mass—children of the Bible! But Virginia is too near home! So is Garrison! One would have thought there was something in the human breast which would sometimes break through policy. These noblehearted men whom I have named must surely have found quite irksome the constant practice of what Dr. Gardiner used to call "that despicable virtue, prudence"! [Laughter.] One would have thought, when they heard that name spoken with contempt, their ready eloquence would have leaped from its scabbard to avenge even a word that

threatened him with insult. But it never came—never! [Sensation.] I do not say I blame them. Perhaps they thought they should serve the cause better by drawing a broad black line between themselves and him. Perhaps they thought the Devil could be cheated—I do not think he can.

We are perfectly willing—I am, for one—to be the dead lumber that shall make a path for these men into the light and love of the people. We hope for nothing better. Use us freely, in any way, for the slave. When the temple is finished, the tools will not complain that they are thrown aside, let who will lead up the nation to "put on the topstone with shoutings." But while so much remains to be done, while our little camp is beleaguered all about, do nothing to weaken his influence, whose sagacity, more than any other single man's, has led us up hither, and whose name is identified with that movement which the North still heeds, and the South still fears the most. After all, Mr. Chairman, this is no hard task. We know very well that, notwithstanding this loud clamor about our harsh judgment of men and things, our opinions differ very little from those of our Free Soil friends, or of intelligent men generally, when you really get at them. It has even been said that one of that family which has made itself so infamously conspicuous here in executing the Fugitive Slave Law, a judge, whose earnest defense of that law we all heard in Faneuil Hall, did himself, but a little while before, arrange for a fugitive to be hid till pursuit was over. I hope it is true—it would be an honorable inconsistency. And if it be not true of him, we know it is of others. Yet it is base to incite others to deeds, at which, whenever we are hidden from public notice, our own hearts recoil! But thus we see that when men lay aside the judicial ermine, the senator's robe, or the party collar, and sit down in private life, you can hardly distinguish their tones from ours. Their eyes seem as anointed as our own. As in Pope's day,

> At all we laugh they laugh, no doubt;
> The only difference is, we dare *laugh out.*

Caution is not always good policy in a cause like ours. It is said that when Napoleon saw the day going against him, he used to throw away all the rules of war, and trust himself to the hot

impetuosity of his soldiers. The masses are governed more by impulse than conviction; and even were it not so, the convictions of most men are on our side, and this will surely appear, if we can only pierce the crust of their prejudice or indifference. I observe that our Free Soil friends never stir their audience so deeply as when some individual leaps beyond the platform, and strikes upon the very heart of the people. Men listen to discussions of laws and tactics with ominous patience. It is when Mr. Sumner, in Faneuil Hall, avows his determination to disobey the Fugitive Slave Law, and cries out, "I was a man before I was a Commissioner,"—when Mr. Giddings says of the fall of slavery, quoting Adams, "Let it come; if it must come in *blood,* yet I say let it come!"—that their associates on the platform are sure they are wrecking the party, while many a heart beneath beats its first pulse of antislavery life.

These are brave words. When I compare them with the general tone of Free Soil men in Congress, I distrust the atmosphere of Washington and of politics. These men move about, Sauls and Goliaths among us, taller by many a cubit. There they lose port and stature. Mr. Sumner's speech in the Senate unsays no part of his Faneuil Hall pledge. But, though discussing the same topic, no one would gather from any word or argument that the speaker ever took such ground as he did in Faneuil Hall. It is all through, the *law,* the *manner* of the surrender, not the surrender itself, of the slave, that he objects to. As my friend Mr. Pillsbury so forcibly says, so far as anything in the speech shows, he puts the slave behind the jury trial, behind the *habeas corpus* act, and behind the new interpretation of the Constitution, and says to the slave claimant: "You must get through all these, before you reach him; but if you *can* get through all these, you may have him!" It was no tone like this which made the old Hall rock! Not if he got through twelve jury trials, and forty *habeas corpus* acts, and constitutions built high as yonder monument, would he permit so much as the shadow of a little finger of the slave claimant to touch the slave! [Loud applause.] At least, so he was understood. In an elaborate discussion, by the leader of the political antislavery party, of the whole topic of fugitive slaves, you do not find one protest against the surrender itself,

one frank expression on the constitutional clause, or any indication of the speaker's final purpose, should anyone be properly claimed under that provision. It was under no such uncertain trumpet that the antislavery host was originally marshaled. The tone is that of the German soldiers whom Napoleon routed. They did not care, they said, for the defeat, but only that they were not beaten according to rule. [Laughter and cheers.] Mr. Mann, in his speech of February 15, 1850, says: *"The States being separated,* I would as soon return my own brother or sister into bondage, as I would return a fugitive slave. Before God, and Christ, and all Christian men, they are my brothers and sisters." What a condition! from the lips, too, of a champion of the Higher Law! Whether the States be separate or united, neither my brother nor any other man's brother shall, with my consent, go back to bondage. [Enthusiastic cheers.] So speaks the *heart*—Mr. Mann's version is that of the politician.

Mr. Mann's recent speech in August 1852, has the same noncommittal tone to which I have alluded in Mr. Sumner's. While professing, in the most eloquent terms, his loyalty to the Higher Law, Mr. Sutherland asked: "Is there, in Mr. Mann's opinion, any conflict between that Higher Law and the Constitution? If so, what is it? If not so, why introduce an irrelevant topic into the debate?" Mr. Mann avoided any reply, and asked not to be interrupted! Is that the frankness which becomes an abolitionist? Can such concealment help any cause? The design of Mr. Sutherland is evident. If Mr. Mann had allowed there was no conflict between the Higher Law and the Constitution, all his remarks were futile and out of order. But if he asserted that any such conflict existed, how did he justify himself in swearing to support that instrument?—a question our Free Soil friends are slow to meet. Mr. Mann saw the dilemma, and avoided it by silence!

The same speech contains the usual deprecatory assertions that Free Soilers have no wish to interfere with slavery in the States; that they "consent to let slavery remain where it is." If he means that he, Horace Mann, a moral and accountable being, "consents to let slavery remain where it is," all the rest of his speech is sound and fury, signifying nothing. If he means that he, Horace Mann, as a politician and party man, consents to that, but, else-

where and otherwise, will do his best to abolish this "all-comprehending wickedness of slavery, in which every wrong and every crime has its natural home," then he should have plainly said so. Otherwise, his disclaimer is unworthy of him, and could have deceived no one. He must have known that all the South care for is the action, not in what capacity the deed is done.

Mr. Giddings is more careful in his statement; but, judged by his speech on the "Platforms," how little does he seem to understand either his own duty or the true philosophy of the cause he serves! He says:

> We, Sir, would drive the slave question from discussion in this hall. It never had a constitutional existence here. Separate this government from all interference with slavery; let the Federal power wash its hands from that institution; let us purify ourselves from its contagion; leave it with the States, who alone have the power to sustain it—then, Sir, will agitation cease in regard to it here; then we shall have nothing more to do with it; our time will be no more occupied with it; and, like a band of freemen, a band of brothers, we could meet here, and legislate for the prosperity, the improvement of mankind, for the elevation of our race.

Mr. Sumner speaks in the same strain. He says:

> The time will come when courts or Congress will declare, that nowhere under the Constitution can man hold property in man. For the republic, such a decree will be the way of peace and safety. As slavery is banished from the national jurisdiction, it will cease to vex our national politics. It may linger in the States as a local institution, but it will no longer endanger national animosities when it no longer demands national support. . . . For himself, he knows no better aim under the Constitution than to bring the government back to the precise position which it occupied when it was launched.

This seems to me a very mistaken strain. Whenever slavery is banished from our national jurisdiction, it will be a momentous gain, a vast stride. But let us not mistake the halfway house for the end of the journey. I need not say that it matters not to abolitionists under what special law slavery exists. Their battle lasts while it exists anywhere, and I doubt not Mr. Sumner and Mr. Giddings feel themselves enlisted for the whole war. I will even suppose, what neither of these gentlemen states, that their

plan includes, not only that slavery shall be abolished in the District [of Columbia] and Territories, but that the slave basis of representation shall be struck from the Constitution, and the slave-surrender clause construed away. But even then, does Mr. Giddings or Mr. Sumner really believe that slavery, existing in its full force in the States, "will cease to vex our national politics"? Can they point to any State where a powerful oligarchy, possessed of immense wealth, has ever existed, without attempting to meddle in the government? Even now, does not manufacturing, banking, and commercial capital perpetually vex our politics? Why should not slave capital exert the same influence? Do they imagine that a hundred thousand men, possessed of two thousand millions of dollars, which they feel the spirit of the age is seeking to tear from their grasp, will not eagerly catch at all the support they can obtain by getting the control of the government? In a land where the dollar is almighty, "where the sin of not being rich is only atoned for by the effort to become so," do they doubt that such an oligarchy will generally succeed? Besides, banking and manufacturing stocks are not urged by despair to seek a controlling influence in politics. They know they are about equally safe, whichever party rules—that no party wishes to legislate their rights away. Slave property knows that its being allowed to exist depends on its having the virtual control of the government. Its constant presence in politics is dictated, therefore, by despair, as well as by the wish to secure fresh privileges. Money, however, is not the only strength of the Slave Power. That, indeed, were enough in an age when capitalists are our feudal barons. But, though driven entirely from national shelter, the slaveholders would have the strength of old associations, and of peculiar laws in their own States, which gives those States wholly into their hands. . . .

But is Mr. Giddings willing to sit down with slaveholders, "like a band of brothers," and not seek, knowing all the time that they are tyrants at home, to use the common strength to protect their victims? Does he not know that it is impossible for Free States and Slave States to unite under any form of Constitution, no matter how clean the parchment may be, without the compact resulting in new strength to the slave system? It is the unim-

paired strength of Massachusetts and New York, and the youthful vigor of Ohio, that, even now, enable bankrupt Carolina to hold up the institution. Every nation must maintain peace within her limits. No government can exist which does not fulfill that function. When we say the Union will maintain peace in Carolina, that being a Slave State, what does "peace" mean? It means keeping the slave beneath the heel of his master. Now, even on the principle of two wrongs making a right, if we put this great weight of a common government into the scale of the slaveholder, we are bound to add something equal to the slave's side. But no, Mr. Giddings is content to give the slaveholder the irresistible and organic help of a common government, and bind himself to utter no word, and move not a finger, in his civil capacity, to help the slave! An abolitionist would find himself not much at home, I fancy, in that "band of brothers"! . . .

Mr. Chairman, when I remember the grand port of these men elsewhere, and witness this confusion of ideas, and veiling of their proud crests to party necessities, they seem to me to lose in Washington something of their old giant proportions. How often have we witnessed this change! It seems the inevitable result of political life under any government, but especially under ours; and we are surprised at it in these men, only because we fondly hoped they would be exceptions to the general rule. It was Chamfort, I think, who first likened a republican senate house to Milton's Pandemonium—another proof of the rare insight French writers have shown in criticizing republican institutions. The Capitol at Washington always brings to my mind that other Capitol, which in Milton's great epic "rose like an exhalation . . . from the burning marl"—that towering palace, "with starry lamps and blazing cressets" hung—with "roof of fretted gold" and stately height, its hall "like a covered field." You remember, Sir, the host of archangels gathered round it, and how thick the airy crowd

> Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
> Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
> In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
> Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room

> Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
> Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves,
> Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
> Or fountain, some belated peasant sees. . . .
>
> Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
> Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
> Though without number still, amid the hall
> Of that infernal court.

Mr. Chairman, they got no further than the hall! [Cheers.] They were not, in the current phrase, *"a healthy party"!* The healthy party—the men who made no compromise in order to come under that arch—Milton describes further on, where he says:

> But far within,
> And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
> The great seraphic lords and cherubim,
> In close recess and secret conclave, sat;
> A thousand demigods on golden seats
> Frequent and full.

These were the healthy party! [Loud applause.] These are the Casses and the Houstons, the Footes and the Soulés, the Clays, the Websters, and the Douglases, that bow no lofty forehead in the dust, but can find ample room and verge enough under the Constitution. Our friends go down there, and must be dwarfed into pygmies before they can find space within the lists!

It would be superfluous to say that we grant the entire sincerity and trueheartedness of these men. But in critical times, when a wrong step entails most disastrous consequences, to "mean well" is not enough. Sincerity is no shield for any man from the criticism of his fellow laborers. I do not fear that such men as these will take offense at our discussion of their views and conduct. Long years of hard labor, in which we have borne at least our share, have resulted in a golden opportunity. How to use it, friends differ. Shall we stand courteously silent, and let these men play out the play, when, to our thinking, their plan will slacken the zeal, balk the hopes, and waste the efforts of the slave's friends? No! I know Charles Sumner's love for the cause

so well that I am sure he will welcome my criticism whenever I deem his counsel wrong; that he will hail every effort to serve our common client more efficiently. [Great cheering.] It is not his honor nor mine that is at issue; not his feeling nor mine that is to be consulted. The only question for either of us is, What in these golden moments can be done? where can the hardest blow be struck? [Loud applause.] I hope I am just to Mr. Sumner; I have known him long, and honor him. I know his genius, I honor his virtues; yet if, from his high place, he sends out counsels which I think dangerous to the cause, I am bound to raise my voice against them. I do my duty in a private communication to him first, then in public to his friends and mine. The friendship that will not bear this criticism is but the frostwork of a winter's morning, which the sun looks upon and it is gone. His friendship will survive all that I say of him, and mine will survive all that he shall say of me; and this is the only way in which the antislavery cause can be served. Truth, success, victory, triumph over the obstacles that beset us—this is all either of us wants. [Cheers.]

If all I have said to you is untrue, if I have exaggerated, explain to me this fact. In 1831, Mr. Garrison commenced a paper advocating the doctrine of immediate emancipation. He had against him the thirty thousand churches and all the clergy of the country—its wealth, its commerce, its press. In 1831, what was the state of things? There was the most entire ignorance and apathy on the slave question. If men knew of the existence of slavery, it was only as a part of picturesque Virginia life. No one preached, no one talked, no one wrote about it. No whisper of it stirred the surface of the political sea. The Church heard of it occasionally, when some colonization agent asked funds to send the blacks to Africa. Old schoolbooks tainted with some antislavery selections had passed out of use, and new ones were compiled to suit the times. Soon as any dissent from the prevailing faith appeared, everyone set himself to crush it. The pulpits preached at it; the press denounced it; mobs tore down houses, threw presses into the fire and the stream, and shot the editors; religious conventions tried to smother it; parties arrayed themselves against it. Daniel Webster boasted in the Senate that he had never introduced the subject of slavery to that body, and never would. Mr.

Clay, in 1839, makes a speech for the Presidency, in which he says that to discuss the subject of slavery is moral treason, and that no man has a right to introduce the subject into Congress. Mr. Benton, in 1844, laid down his platform, and he not only denies the right, but asserts that he never has and never will discuss the subject. Yet Mr. Clay, from 1839 down to his death, hardly made a remarkable speech of any kind, except on slavery. Mr. Webster, having indulged now and then in a little easy rhetoric, as at Niblo's and elsewhere, opens his mouth in 1840, generously contributing his aid to both sides, and stops talking about it only when death closes his lips. Mr. Benton's six or eight speeches in the United States Senate have all been on the subject of slavery in the Southwestern section of the country, and from the basis of whatever claim he has to the character of a statesman, and he owes his seat in the next Congress somewhat, perhaps, to antislavery pretensions! The Whig and Democratic parties pledged themselves just as emphatically against the antislavery discussion—against agitation and free speech. These men said: "It shan't be talked about, it won't be talked about!" These are *your statesmen!*—men who understand the present, that is, and mold the future! The man who understands his own time, and whose genius molds the future to his views, he is a statesman, is he not? These men devoted themselves to banks, to the tariff, to internal improvements, to constitutional and financial questions. They said to slavery: "Back! no entrance here! We pledge ourselves against you." And then there came up a humble printer boy, who whipped them into the traces, and made them talk, like Hotspur's starling, nothing BUT slavery. He scattered all these gigantic shadows—tariff, bank, constitutional questions, financial questions—and slavery, like the colossal head in Walpole's romance, came up and filled the whole political horizon! [Enthusiastic applause.] Yet you must remember he is not a statesman; he is a "fanatic." He has no discipline—Mr. "Ion" says so; he does not understand the "discipline that is essential to victory"! This man did not understand his own time, he did not know what the future was to be, he was not able to shape it, he had no "prudence," he had no "foresight"! Daniel Webster says, "I have never introduced this subject, and never will"—and died

brokenhearted because he had not been able to talk enough about it. Benton says, "I will never speak of slavery," and lives to break with his party on this issue! Mr. Clay says it is "moral treason" to introduce the subject into Congress, and lives to see Congress turned into an antislavery debating society to suit the purpose of one "too powerful individual"!

These were statesmen, mark you! Two of them have gone to their graves covered with eulogy; and our national stock of eloquence is all insufficient to describe how profound and far-reaching was the sagacity of Daniel Webster! Remember who it was that said, in 1831, "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, AND I WILL BE HEARD"! [Repeated cheers.] That speaker has lived twenty-two years, and the complaint of twenty-three millions of people is, "Shall we never hear of anything but slavery?" [Cheers.] I heard Dr. Kirk, of Boston, say in his own pulpit, when he returned from London —where he had been as a representative to the "Evangelical Alliance"—"I went up to London, and they asked me what I thought of the question of immediate emancipation. They examined us all. Is an American never to travel anywhere in the world but men will throw this troublesome question in his face?" Well, it is all HIS fault [pointing to Mr. Garrison]. [Enthusiastic cheers.]

Now, when we come to talk of statesmanship, of sagacity in choosing time and measures, of endeavor, by proper means, to right the public mind, of keen insight into the present and potent sway over the future, it seems to me that the abolitionists, who have taken—whether for good or for ill, whether to their discredit or to their praise— this country by the four corners, and shaken it until you can hear nothing but slavery, whether you travel in railroad or steamboat, whether you enter the hall of legislation or read the columns of a newspaper—it seems to me that such men may point to the present aspect of the nation, to their originally avowed purpose, to the pledges and efforts of all your great men against them, and then let you determine to which side the credit of sagacity and statesmanship belongs. Napoleon busied himself, at St. Helena, in showing how Wellington ought not to have conquered at Waterloo. The world has never

got time to listen to the explanation. Sufficient for it that the Allies entered Paris. In like manner, it seems hardly the province of a defeated Church and State to deny the skill of measures by which they have been conquered.

It may sound strange to some, this claim for Mr. Garrison of a profound statesmanship. Men have heard him styled a mere fanatic so long that they are incompetent to judge him fairly. "The phrases men are accustomed," says Goethe, "to repeat incessantly, end by becoming convictions, and ossify the organs of intelligence." I cannot accept you, therefore, as my jury. I appeal from Festus to Caesar; from the prejudice of our streets to the common sense of the world, and to your children.

Every thoughtful and unprejudiced mind must see that such an evil as slavery will yield only to the most radical treatment. If you consider the work we have to do, you will not think us needlessly aggressive, or that we dig down unnecessarily deep in laying the foundations of our enterprise. A money power of two thousand millions of dollars, as the prices of slaves now range, held by a small body of able and desperate men; that body raised into a political aristocracy by special constitutional provisions; cotton, the product of slave labor, forming the basis of our whole foreign commerce, and the commercial class thus subsidized; the press bought up, the pulpit reduced to vassalage, the heart of the common people chilled by a bitter prejudice against the black race; our leading men bribed, by ambition, either to silence or open hostility—in such a land, on what shall an abolitionist rely? On a few cold prayers, mere lip service, and never from the heart? On a church resolution, hidden often in its records, and meant only as a decent cover for servility in daily practice? On political parties, with their superficial influence at best, and seeking ordinarily only to use existing prejudices to the best advantage? Slavery has deeper roots here than any aristocratic institution has in Europe; and politics is but the common pulse beat, of which revolution is the fever spasm. Yet we have seen European aristocracy survive storms which seemed to reach down to the primal strata of European life. Shall we, then, trust to mere politics, where even revolution has failed? How shall the stream rise above its fountain? Where shall our church organiza-

tions or parties get strength to attack their great parent and molder, the Slave Power? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? The old jest of one who tried to lift himself in his own basket, is but a tame picture of the man who imagines that, by working solely through existing sects and parties, he can destroy slavery. Mechanics say nothing but an earthquake, strong enough to move all Egypt, can bring down the Pyramids.

Experience has confirmed these views. The abolitionists who have acted on them have a "short method" with all unbelievers. They have but to point to their own success, in contrast with every other man's failure. To waken the nation to its real state, and chain it to the consideration of this one duty, is half the work. So much we have done. Slavery has been made the question of this generation. To startle the South to madness, so that every step she takes, in her blindness, is one step more toward ruin, is much. This we have done. Witness Texas and the Fugitive Slave Law. To have elaborated for the nation the only plan of redemption, pointed out the only exodus from this "sea of troubles," is much. This we claim to have done in our motto of IMMEDIATE, UNCONDITIONAL EMANCIPATION ON THE SOIL. The closer any statesmanlike mind looks into the question, the more favor our plan finds with it. The Christian asks fairly of the infidel, "If this religion be not from God, how do you explain its triumph, and the history of the first three centuries?" Our question is similar. If our agitation has not been wisely planned and conducted, explain for us the history of the last twenty years! Experience is a safe light to walk by, and he is not a rash man who expects success in future from the same means which have secured it in times past.

Crispus Attucks and the Negroes

The role of the Negro in antislavery affairs was enigmatic in Phillips's day, and would continue to be. There would be those who felt it necessary to raise the Negroes not only to parity with the white crusaders in the antislavery struggle, but even above them. Certainly, as a race, the Negroes struggled in their own behalf, and produced heroes to exemplify their dissatisfaction and voice their sorrows. Such individuals as James Forten, Dr. David Ruggles, Sojourner Truth, William Wells Brown, Harriet Tubman, and the incomparable Frederick Douglass added luster to American as well as Negro aspirations. Nevertheless, it defies reality to imagine that they could have, out of their own and their race's capacities, overthrown or even bent Negro slavery or the imputation of Negro inferiority. Many Northern whites did not disparage Negro capacities; they merely ignored the challenge of determining Negro qualities and rights. Abolitionists were themselves divided on the issue of Negro destiny, and wished the destruction of slavery, rather than the uplift of the Negro. Wendell Phillips was one of those who deemed it proper to assert the categorical need for Negro equality, thus standing on the Declaration of Independence rather than the Constitution. With Garrison, he held the latter to sanction slavery, and therefore to be unworthy of support. Phillips, in treating Negroes as individuals, rather than as an anonymous mass, avoided the blandishments of the slave apologist, and also of the sentimentalist.*

Wendell Phillips delivered the following speech at a festival in Faneuil Hall, Boston, March 5, 1858, commemorating the Boston Massacre.

* For numerous careers and tendencies, see Carter G. Woodson and Charles H. Wesley, *The Negro in Our History* (1962 ed.).

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I am very glad to stand here in an hour when we come together to do honor to one of the first martyrs in our Revolution. I think we sometimes tell the story of what he did with too little appreciation of how much it takes to make the first move in the cold streets of a revolutionary epoch. It is a very easy thing to sit down and read the history; it is a very easy thing to imagine what we would have done—it is a very different thing to strike the first blow. It is a very hard thing to spring out of the ranks of common, everyday life—submission to law, recognition of established government—and lift the first musket. The man or the dozen men who do it, deserve great, pre-eminent, indisputable places in the history of the Revolution. It is an easy thing to fight when the blood is hot; but this man whose memory we commemorate tonight stepped out of common life, everyday quiet, and lifted his arm among the very first against the government. It is only pre-eminent courage that can do this. Today, in yonder capital of Paris, the whole government rests on a thin film of ice. A hundred men in arms in the streets would break it; that hundred men cannot be found—a hundred men willing to risk their lives, with a cold, unmoved populace behind them. Those five men who were killed on that eventful night of the 5th of March, of whom Crispus Attucks was the leader, they never have had their fair share of fame.

Our friend Theodore Parker* said the Revolution was not born so early. I think him wrong there; it was. Emerson said the first gun heard round the world was that of Lexington. Who set the example of guns? Who taught the British soldier that he might be defeated? Who dared first to look into his eyes? Those five men! The 5th of March was the baptism of blood. The 5th of March was what made the Revolution something beside talk. Revolution always begins with the populace, never with the leaders. They argue, they resolve, they organize; it is the populace that, like the edge of the cloud, shows the lightning first. This was the lightning. I hail the 5th of March as the baptism of the Revolution into forcible resistance; without that it would have

* Theodore Parker (1810-1860), one of the fierce voices of liberal religion in New England, and of abolitionist sentiment. He was with the Garrisonians, though not of them. [Ed.]

been simply a discussion of rights. I place, therefore, this Crispus Attucks in the foremost rank of the men that dared. When we talk of courage, he rises, with his dark face, in his clothes of the laborer, his head uncovered, his arm raised above him defying bayonets—the emblem of Revolutionary violence in its dawn; and when the proper symbols are placed around the base of the statue of Washington, one corner will be filled by the colored man defying the British muskets. [Applause.]

I think it is right that we should come here and remember Crispus Attucks. It is right, because every colored man has but one thing to remember in life, and that is SLAVERY. All races are one—they are a unit. The white race is a unit, the Caucasian race is a unit, the black race is a unit—one. There is only one great, terrible fact in regard to the colored race at the present moment —it is that millions of it wear the chain; there is nothing for the rest of the race decent to do but to devote themselves to the breaking of that chain. [Applause.] All literature, all wealth, all patriotism, all religion, should gravitate toward emancipation. I value the triumphs of the literary genius of Dumas solely as an argument thrown into the scale of the great balance, whether the colored man is worthy of liberty. Genius is worth nothing else now with the colored man, except as helping that argument. I would have you, as your friend Dr. Rock suggested, thrifty, eloquent, industrious, successful, rich, able, only as an argument that the colored race has a right to a place side by side and equal with the white. I wish I could impress this truth on every colored man. His race today is on trial. The world says it merits only chains. The best thing he can do with his life, with his genius, with his wealth, with his character, is to throw them into the scale of the argument, and make proslavery prejudice kick the beam.

I want to say another thing. I do not believe in the argument which my learned and eloquent friend Theodore Parker has stated in regard even to the *courage* of colored blood. It is a hazardous thing to dare to differ with so profound a scholar, with so careful a thinker as Theodore Parker; but I cannot accept his argument and for this reason—he says the Caucasian race, each man of it, would kill twenty men and enslave twenty

more rather than be a slave; and thence he deduces that the colored race, which suffers slavery here, is not emphatically distinguished for courage. I take issue on that statement. There is no race in the world that has not been enslaved at one period. This very Saxon blood we boast, was enslaved for five centuries in Europe. We were slaves—we *white* people. This very English blood of ours—Saxon—was the peculiar mark of slavery for five or six hundred years. The Slavonic race, of which we are a branch, is enslaved by millions today in Russia. The French race has been enslaved for centuries. Then add this fact—no race, *not one,* ever vindicated its freedom from slavery by the sword; we did not win freedom by the sword; we did not resist, we Saxons. If you go to the catalogue of races that have actually abolished slavery by the sword, the colored race is the only one that has ever yet afforded an instance, and that is St. Domingo. [Applause.] This white race of ours did not vindicate its title to liberty by the sword. The villeins of England, who were slaves, did not get their own liberty; it was gotten for them. They did not even rise in insurrection, they were quiet; and if in 1200 or 1300 of the Christian Era, a black man had landed on the soil of England and said: "This white race doesn't deserve freedom; don't you see the villeins scattered through Kent, Northumberland, and Sussex? Why don't they rise and cut their masters' throats?"—the Theodore Parkers of that age would have been like the Dr. Rocks of this, they could not have answered. The only race in history that ever took the sword into their hands, and cut their chains, is the black race of St. Domingo. Let that fact go for what it is worth. The villeinage of France and England wore out by the progress of commerce, by the growth of free cities, by the education of the people, by the advancement of Christianity. So I think the slavery of the blacks will wear out. I think, therefore, that the simple and limited experiment of three centuries of black slavery is not basis enough for the argument. No; the black man may well scorn it, and say, "I summon before the jury, Africa, with her savage millions, that has maintained her independence for two or three thousand years; I summon Egypt with the arts; I summon St. Domingo with the sword—and I choose to be tried in the great company of the millions, not alone!" And in that com-

pany, he may claim to have shown as much courage as any other race—full as much.

I, therefore, will never try the argument with the single illustration of American slavery. No; and yet if I did, I should be proud to have the same color with Margaret Garner;* for I know of no prouder name in the history of the nineteenth century than of that heroic mother, standing alone, defying the Democracy of thirty-one States, rising in the instinctive love of a mother superior to the low Christianity of the present age, and writing her religion and her heroism in the bloody right hand that gave her infant back to God for safekeeping. [Loud applause.] Any man might well be proud to share the color of that mother whose grave some future Plutarch or Tacitus will find, when he calls up the heroism of the nineteenth century.

My friend Mr. [William C.] Nell has gathered together, in a small volume, instances enough of the heroism of colored blood, and the share it took in our Revolution, and yet he has not told half the story. I commend his book to the care and patronage of every man who loves the colored race. And not only to buy it—that is not enough. If there is any young man who has any literary ambition, let him fill up the sketch; let him complete the picture; let him go sounding along the untrodden fields of Revolutionary anecdote, and gather up every fact touching the share his race took in that struggle. Why, the wealthiest family in Boston—that of the Lawrences—in their own family history, record the fact that the father of Abbott Lawrence was the captain of a company made up entirely of colored men; and when once, in the fierce and hot valor of a forgetful moment, he rushed too far into the ranks of the enemy, and was alone, ready to be made a prisoner, he looked back to his ranks of colored men, and they charged through two lines of the enemy, rescued their captain, and made it possible for the Lawrences to exist. [Applause.] They ought to be grateful—yes, that whole wealthy family ought to be grateful to colored courage that it saved their

* One of a family of fugitive slaves from Kentucky who in 1856 crossed the Ohio River near Cincinnati and were apprehended. Margaret Garner tried to kill all her children, rather than have them returned with her to slavery, and did succeed in killing her three-year-old daughter Mary. [Ed.]

own father from a Jersey ship-of-war, and enabled him to take his share in the Revolutionary struggle, and to be buried in the old homestead at Groton. And doubtless, if your literary zeal shall follow up the path your friend Nell has opened, you will find scarcely any name on the whole roll of Revolutionary fame that does not owe more or less to colored courage and co-operation. I commend it to your care. Never forget the part your race took in the great struggle; cherish, preserve, illustrate it. Compel the white man to write your names, not as they have written them in Connecticut, at the bottom of the rest, with a line between, Negro-pew fashion, but make them write them on the same marble and in the same line. The time will yet come when we will, as Caleb Cushing says, drag this Massachusetts legislature at our heels, and *they* shall pay for a monument to Attucks. [Loud cheers, and cries of "Good."] It will be but the magnanimous atonement for the injury and forgetfulness of so many years. They owe it to him, and they shall yet pay it. You and I, faithful to our trust, will see to it. Our fathers were honest and grateful enough to bury him from beneath these very walls. John Hancock did himself the honor, from his own balcony in Beacon Street, to give that manner to colored men, recognizing them as citizens and as soldiers. The time shall come when the flavor of that good deed shall perfume Beacon Street, and make it worthier [cheers]—I always thought that I had a pride in being born in it; now I know the reason. [Renewed cheering.]

Yes, like "Old Mortality," we come here tonight to make the monument plainer, to scrape off the moss that has gathered over it. It is only "the beginning of the end." The time shall come, if you, young men, do your duty, when the part your ancestors played, when the laurels they won, when the deeds they performed in our Revolutionary era, shall be raked up from forgetfulness. I will tell you how. Do you know how great-grandfathers get remembered? I will tell you. The world is very forgetful. Republics are proverbially ungrateful. You must not expect that the white men will wake up and do you justice. Oh, no! I will tell you how it is to be done. We are very fond of finding reasons for things and explaining them away. If we see a boy very bright, with great genius, we are fond of saying, "Well, we knew his

father and mother, and they were very bright people." Or, if we see a grandson very famous, we say, "Well, he comes of a good stock; we remember his grandfather, he could do this thing or the other!" When Theodore Parker came into the city of Boston, and made the boldest pulpit in the city, men said, "It is all right. This is the blood that fired the first musket at Lexington, and it is only cropping out in a new place." Now, some of you colored men, Boston colored men, go you tomorrow and show your valor in the field, valor in life, valor in education, valor in making money, valor in making your mark in the world—and instantly the papers will begin to say, "Oh, yes; they have always been a brave, gallant people! Was there not an Attucks in '70? By the by, let us build him a monument." You must remind us by instances. You must not come to us and argue, that is not the way to convince us. The common people do not stop to argue. You must convince us by a life. We want another Attucks; and I will conclude by showing you that you have another Attucks.* Here is a letter from Mr. [Thomas W.] Higginson, excusing himself for not coming; and with this, which is a very excellent speech in itself, I will finish mine.

* An allusion to the fact stated in Higginson's letter, "that the very first man to enter the courthouse door, in the attempt to rescue Anthony Burns, was not, as has been commonly supposed, a white man, but a colored man."

Against Idolatry

The 1850s found Wendell Phillips a veteran of endless debates within and without the antislavery movement. No one knew how long the battle for the nation's feelings and polity would continue; Phillips was set to continue the argument indefinitely, for he could not believe that any program had validity which was not founded on justice and principle. So he remained intransigent while crisis after crisis strangely brought former foes into apparent fellowship with him. Passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 roused the belligerence of Northerners who were not abolitionists and who were even antiabolitionists, but who resented being turned into slave catchers by their government in Washington. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 opened the possibility that the free West might be given over to the slaveholders. The North responded by cheering Free Soil settlers in Kansas and tolerating the law-defying adventures of Captain John Brown in that embattled region. Northerners were horrified by the Dred Scott decision of the United States Supreme Court which found that slaves could be legally transported in their section. They once and for all made the law of the land as it applied to fugitive slaves invalid above Mason-Dixon. Yet they continued to revere Daniel Webster, even though he had helped fasten the Fugitive Slave Law upon them, and they approved conservatives of every stripe who were becoming the standard-bearers of the new, growing Republican Party, and who sought victory at the polls, rather than Negro emancipation. In his lecture on "Idolatry," Phillips refused to speak well of Webster merely because he was now dead. Phillips would not relax his studied criticism of compromisers and casuists. "Against Idolatry," delivered in Boston, October 4, 1859, was less political than many of Phillips's efforts, and its wit, allusions, and generalizations placed it more directly than some of his other essays in the great tradition of New England letters.

MR. PRESIDENT AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I feel half inclined to borrow a little wit from an article in a late number of the *Atlantic Monthly,* "My Double, and How He Undid Me,"* and say, "I agree entirely with the gentleman who has just taken his seat. [Laughter.] So much has been said, and so well said, that I feel there is no need of my occupying your attention." [Renewed laughter.] But then I should lose the hearty satisfaction it gives me to say with what delight I stand upon this platform, and how sincerely I appreciate the honor you do me, Mr. Chairman, by allowing me to aid in opening this course of lectures. I know, Sir, that you hoped, as I did, that this post would be filled by our great Senator, who seeks health on a foreign soil. No one laments more sincerely than I do that he felt it impossible and inconsistent with his other duties to be here. It is not too much to say that the occasion was worthy of a word even from Charles Sumner. [Hearty applause.]

Appreciating the lyceum system as I do, looking upon it as one of the departments of the national school, truly American in its origin, and eminently republican in its character and end, I feel how eloquently his voice would have done it justice. For this is no common evening, Mr. President. The great boast of New England is liberal culture and toleration. Easier to preach than to practice! Many lyceums have opened their doors to men of different shades of opinion, and some few have even granted a fair amount of liberty in the choice of subject, and the expression of individual opinion. None of us can forget, on such an occasion as this, the eminently catholic spirit and brilliant success of that course of Antislavery Lectures in the winter of 1854 and 1855, which we owed chiefly to the energy and to the brave and liberal spirit of Dr. James W. Stone. But you go, Gentlemen, an arrow's flight beyond all lyceums; for, recognizing the essential character of civilization, you place upon your platform the representatives of each sex and of both races. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will listen to consummate eloquence, never heard in Boston be-

* Edward Everett Hale's famous story of a clergyman who trained an amiable, shiftless fellow who looked like him to make public appearances in his stead, using a number of pat phrases for conversation. Properly jumbled, they helped ruin the clergyman's reputation. [Ed.]

fore from the lyceum platform, because "guilty of a skin not colored like our own." [Applause.] And you will listen, besides, to woman, gracefully standing on a platform which boasts itself the source of national education. For decent justice has not been done to woman, in regard to her influence, either upon literature or society; and I welcome with inexpressible delight the inauguration of a course of lectures national and American in the proper sense of the words.

There are men who prate about "nationality," and "the empire," and "manifest destiny," using brave words when their minds rise no higher than some petty mass of white States making money out of cotton and corn. My idea of American nationality makes it the last best growth of the thoughtful mind of the century, treading underfoot sex and race, caste and condition, and collecting on the broad bosom of what deserves the name of an empire, under the shelter of noble, just, and equal laws, all races, all customs, all religions, all languages, all literature, and all ideas. I remember, a year or two ago, they told us of a mob at Milwaukee that forced a man to bring out the body of his wife, born in Asia—which, according to the custom of her forefathers, he was about to burn—and compelled him to submit to American funeral rites, which his soul abhorred. The sheriff led the mob, and the press of the State vindicated the act. This is not my idea of American civilization. They will show you at Rome the stately column of the Emperor Trajan. Carved on its outer surface is the triumphal march of the Emperor, when he came back to Rome, leading all nations, all tongues, all customs, all races, in the retinue of his conquest; and they traced it on the eternal marble, circling the pillar from base to capital. Just such is my idea of the empire, broad enough and brave enough to admit both sexes, all creeds, and all tongues in the triumphal procession of this great daughter of the west of the Atlantic. [Loud applause.] That is the reason why I hail this step in Boston—the brain of the Union—saying to the Negro and to woman, "Take your place among the teachers of American Democracy." [Applause.]

I said justice had never been done to woman for her influence upon literature and society. Society is the natural outgrowth of the New Testament, and yet nothing deserving of the name ever

existed in Europe until, two centuries ago, in France, woman called it into being. Society—the only field where the sexes have ever met on terms of equality, the arena where character is formed and studied, the cradle and the realm of public opinion, the crucible of ideas, the world's university, at once a school and a theatre, the spur and the crown of ambition, the tribunal which unmasks pretension and stamps real merit, the power that gives government leave to be, and outruns the lazy Church in fixing the moral sense of the age—who shall fitly describe the lofty place of this element in the history of the last two centuries? Who shall deny that, more than anything else, it deserves the name of the most controlling element in the history of the two centuries just finished? And yet this is the realm of woman, the throne which, like a first conqueror, she founded and then filled.

So with literature. The literature of three centuries ago is not decent to be read: we expurgate it. Within a hundred years, woman has become a reader, and for that reason, as much or more than anything else, literature has sprung to a higher level. No need now to expurgate all you read. Woman, too, is now an author; and I undertake to say that the literature of the next century will be richer than the classic epochs, for that cause. Truth is one forever, absolute; but opinion is truth filtered through the moods, the blood, the disposition of the spectator. Man has looked at creation, and given us his impressions, in Greek literature and English, one-sided, halfway, all awry. Woman now takes the stand to give us her views of God's works and her own creation; and exactly in proportion as woman, though equal, is eternally different from man, just in that proportion will the literature of the next century be doubly rich, because we shall have both sides. . . .

It is in this light and for this value that I appreciate the lyceum. We have four sources of education in this country: talk, literature, government, religion. The lyceum makes one and the most important element of each. It is a church, without a creed, and with a constant rotation of clergymen. It teaches closer ethics than the pulpit. Let lyceum committees debate whether they shall invite Theodore Parker, or theological papers scold because Beecher stands on your platform, and out of such debate the

people will pick a lesson of toleration better, more real, and more impressive than Locke's *Treatise* or a dozen sermons could give them. Responsibility teaches as nothing else can. That is God's great motor power. When your horse cannot move his load, throw a sack of grain on his back and he draws easily on. He draws by weight, not by muscle. Give the masses nothing to do, and they will topple down thrones and cut throats; give them the government, as here, and they will make pulpits useless and colleges an impertinence. It is the best part of literature, too, for it is the only part that is vital. I value letters. I thank God that I was taught for many years; enough to see inside the sham. . . .

So it is with government. Government arrogates to itself that it alone forms men. As well might the man down here in the courthouse, who registers the birth of children, imagine that he was the father of all the children he registers. [Loud laughter.] Everybody knows that government never began anything. It is the whole world that thinks and governs. Books, churches, governments are what we make them. France is Catholic, and has a Pope; but she is the most tolerant country in the world in matters of religion. New England is Protestant, and has toleration written all over her statute book; but she has a pope in every village, and the first thing that tests a boy's courage is to dare to differ from his father. [Applause.] Popes! why, we have got two as signal popes as they had in Europe three centuries ago—there is *Bellows* at Avignon and *Adams* at Rome.* [Great merriment, followed by loud applause.] So with government. Some think government forms men. Let us take an example.

Take Sir Robert Peel and Webster as measures and examples; two great men, remarkably alike. Neither of them ever had an original idea. [Laughter.] Neither kept long any idea he borrowed. Both borrowed from any quarter, high or low, north or south, friend or enemy. Both were weathercocks, not winds; creatures, not creators. Yet Peel died England's idol, the un-

* Henry W. Bellows (1814-1882), an influential Unitarian clergyman; during the Civil War he served as president of the United States Sanitary Commission. Nehemiah Adams (1806-1878) became notorious to abolitionists through having published in 1854 *A South-Side View of Slavery:* not precisely pro-slavery, but appreciative of the slaveholders' point of view. [Ed.]

questioned head of the statesmen of the age; Webster the disgraced and bankrupt chief of a broken and ruined party. Why? Examine the difference. Webster borrowed free trade of Calhoun, and tariff of Clay; took his constitutional principles from Marshall, his constitutional learning from Story, and his doctrine of treason from Mr. George Ticknor Curtis* [laughter]; and he followed Channing and Garrison a little way, then turned doughface in the wake of Douglas and Davis [applause and a few hisses]; at first, with Algernon Sidney (my blood boils yet as I think how I used to declaim it), he declared the best legacy he could leave his children was free speech and the example of using it; then of Preston S. Brooks** and Legree he took lessons in smothering discussion and hunting slaves. In 1820, when the world was asleep, he rebuked the slave trade; in 1850, when the battle was hottest, he let Everett omit from his works all the best antislavery utterances!

Sir Robert Peel was just like him. He "changed every opinion, violated" (so says one of the *Reviews*) "every pledge, broke up every party, and deserted every colleague he ever had," yet his sun went down in glory. Why? Because his step was ever onward; he lived to learn. Every change was a sacrifice, and he could truly use, in 1829, the glorious Latin Webster borrowed of him, *"Vera pro gratis,"*—"I tell you unwelcome *truth*." But Webster's steps, crablike, were backward. [Applause and hisses.] Hisses! well, "Because thou art virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale?" Because you have your prejudices, shall there be no history written? Our task is unlike that of some recent meetings—*History*, not flattery. [Applause.] Webster moved by compulsion or calculation, not by conviction. He sunk from free trade to a tariff; from Chief Justice [John] Marshall to Mr. George Ticknor

* A famous lawyer whose career was rendered complex by changing times. He helped return the fugitive slave Thomas Sims to slavery in 1852. Later he urged the freeing of Dred Scott on grounds that Congress had jurisdiction over slavery in United States territories. [Ed.]

** Brooks was despised in the North, honored in the South. Bitter over a verbal attack in the Senate by Sumner (1856) which involved Brooks's uncle, Senator A. P. Butler, Brooks violently caned Sumner while he sat writing at his Senate desk, seriously injuring him. Brooks, a South Carolina congressman, then resigned his seat and was promptly re-elected by his constituents. [Ed.]

Curtis; from Garrison to Douglas; from Algernon Sidney to the slave overseers. I read in this one of the dangers of our form of government. As Tocqueville says so wisely, "The weakness of a Democracy is that, unless guarded, it merges in despotism." Such a life is the first step, and half a dozen are the Niagara carrying us over. . . .

We shall have enough to do if we do our duty. The world is awake—some wholly, and some only half. Men who gather their garments scornfully and close about them when their fellows offer to express sympathy for the bravest scholar and most Christian minister the liberal New England sects know—these timid little souls make daily uproar in the market place, crying for a *Broad* Church, a BROAD Church—and one who lives by venturing a bold theory today, and spending tomorrow in taking it back, finding that he has been

> Dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old in drawing nothing out,

assures you that it is not cowardice, but lack of candles and of a liturgy, that makes him useless; and, kind-souled man, he apologizes, and begs us not to be startled with his strange new views, having lived so long in the thin air of his own vanity that he does not know we have had a broad Church for fifteen years—broad enough for all races and colors, all sects, creeds, and parties, for heads and hearts too; broad enough to help the poor, teach the ignorant, shield the weak, raise the fallen, and lift the high higher, to honor God and earn the hate of bad men—ministered to by one [Theodore Parker] whose broad diocese is bounded on the north by the limits of habitable land, runs west with civilization, and east with the English language, and on the south stretches to the line where men stop thinking and live only to breathe and to steal. [Loud applause.]

This Broad-Church reformer knows his place so little that he sneers at spiritualism and socialism, as "vices entitled to no terms." One, an honest effort, however mistaken, to make all men wholly and really brothers in life, property, and thought; and the other, that reaching into the land of spirit which has

stirred the heart and roused the brain of the best men of all ages, and given to literature its soul. Does he give no heed to that profound maxim of Coleridge, "There are errors which no wise man will treat with rudeness while there is a probability that they may be the refraction of some great truth still below the horizon"?

Yes, this "Broad Church"!—humanity would weep if it ever came, for one of its doctrines is, that the statute book is more binding than the Sermon on the Mount, and that the rights of private judgment are a curse. Save us from a Church not broad enough to cover woman and the slave, all the room being kept for the grogshop and the theatre—provided the one will keep sober enough to make the responses, and the other will lend its embroidered rags for this new baby house. [Laughter and applause.]

The honors we grant mark how high we stand, and they educate the future. The men we honor, and the maxims we lay down in measuring our favorites, show the level and morals of the time. Two names have been in everyone's mouth of late, and men have exhausted language in trying to express their admiration and their respect. The courts have covered the grave of Mr. [Rufus] Choate with eulogy. Let us see what is their idea of a great lawyer. We are told that "he worked hard," "he never neglected his client," "he flung over the discussions of the forum the grace of a rare scholarship," "no pressure or emergency ever stirred him to an unkind word." A ripe scholar, a profound lawyer, a faithful servant of his client, a gentleman. This is a good record surely. May he sleep in peace! What he earned, God grant he may have! But the bar that seeks to claim for such a one a place among great jurists must itself be weak indeed; for this is only to make him out the one-eyed monarch of the blind. Not one high moral trait specified; not one patriotic act mentioned; not one patriotic service even claimed. Look at Mr. Webster's idea of what a lawyer should be in order to be called great, in the sketch he drew of Jeremiah Mason, and notice what stress he lays on the religious and moral elevation, and the glorious and high purposes which crowned his life! Nothing of this now! I forget. Mr. Hallett did testify for Mr. Choate's religion [laughter

and applause]; but the law maxim is that a witness should be trusted only in matters he understands, and that evidence, therefore, amounts to nothing. [Merriment.] Incessant eulogy; but not a word of one effort to lift the yoke of cruel or unequal legislation from the neck of its victim; not one attempt to make the code of his country wiser, purer, better; not one effort to bless his times or breathe a higher moral purpose into the community; not one blow struck for right or for liberty, while the battle of the giants was going on about him; not one patriotic act to stir the hearts of his idolaters; not one public act of any kind whatever about whose merit friend or foe could even quarrel, unless when he scouted our great charter as a "glittering generality," or jeered at the philanthropy which tried to practice the Sermon on the Mount! When Cordus, the Roman Senator, whom Tiberius murdered, was addressing his fellows, he began: "Fathers, they accuse me of illegal words; plain proof that there are no illegal deeds with which to charge me." So with these eulogies—words, nothing but words; plain proof that there were no deeds to praise. . . .

Suppose we stood in that lofty temple of jurisprudence, on either side of us the statues of the great lawyers of every age and clime, and let us see what part New England—Puritan, educated, free New England—would bear in the pageant. Rome points to a colossal figure and says, "That is Papinian, who, when the Emperor Caracalla murdered his own brother, and ordered the lawyer to defend the deed, went cheerfully to death, rather than sully his lips with the atrocious plea; and that is Ulpian, who, aiding his prince to put the army below the law, was massacred at the foot of a weak, but virtuous throne."

And France stretches forth her grateful hands, crying, "That is D'Aguesseau, worthy, when he went to face an enraged king, of the farewell his wife addressed him, 'Go! forget that you have a wife and children to ruin, and remember only that you have France to save.' "

England says, "That is Coke, who flung the laurels of eighty years in the face of the first Stuart, in defense of the people. This is Selden, on every book of whose library you saw written the

motto of which he lived worthy, 'Before everything, *Liberty!*' That is Mansfield, silver-tongued, who proclaimed,

> Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
> Receive our air, that moment they are free.

This is Romilly, who spent life trying to make law synonymous with justice, and succeeded in making life and property safer in every city of the empire. And that is Erskine, whose eloquence, spite of Lord Eldon and George III, made it safe to speak and to print."

Then New England shouts, "This is Choate, who made it safe to murder; and of whose health thieves asked before they began to steal."

Boston had a lawyer once, worthy to stand in that Pantheon; one whose untiring energy held up the right arm of Horace Mann, and made this age and all coming ones his debtors; one whose clarion voice and life of consistent example waked the faltering pulpit to its duty in the cause of temperance, laying on that altar the hopes of his young ambition; one whose humane and incessant efforts to make the penal code worthy of our faith and our age ranked his name with McIntosh and Romilly, with Bentham, Beccaria, and Livingston. Best of all, one who had some claim to say, with Selden, "Above all things, *Liberty*," for in the slave's battle his voice was of the bravest—Robert Rantoul. [Prolonged and hearty plaudits.] He died crowned with the laurels both of the Forum and Senate house. The Suffolk Bar took no note of his death. No tongue stirred the air of the courts to do him honor. "When vice is useful, it is a crime to be virtuous," says the Roman proverb. Of that crime, Beacon Street, State Street, and Andover had judged Rantoul guilty. . . .

No man criticizes when private friendship molds the loved form in

> Stone that breathes and struggles,
> Or brass that seems to speak.

Let Mr. Webster's friends crowd their own halls and grounds with his bust and statue. That is no concern of ours. But when they

ask the State to join in doing him honor, we are natives of Massachusetts, and claim the right to express an opinion.

It is a grave thing when a State puts a man among her jewels —especially one whose friends frown on discussion—the glitter of whose fame makes doubtful acts look heroic. One paper, a tea-table critic, warns a speaker not born in the State to cease his criticism of the Webster statue. I do not know why Massachusetts may not import critics as well as heroes; for, let us be thankful, Webster was no Boston boy. But be sure you exercise your right to think NOW.

His eulogy has tasked the ripest genius and the heartiest zeal. Some men say his eulogist has no heart. That is a mistake and cruel injustice! As the French wit said of Fontenelle, he "has as good a heart as can be made out of brains." [Laughter.] No matter what act Webster did, no matter how foul the path he trod, he never lacked someone to gild it with a Greek anecdote, or hide it in a blaze of declamation! I do not say the deed was always whitened, but surely it was something that the eulogist shared the stain. They say in England that when Charles X, an exile in England, hunted there, others floundered through mud and water as they could, but the exiled king was followed by a valet who flung himself down in his path and Charles walked over him as indifferently as if he had really been a plank. How clean the king kept, I do not know. The valet got very muddy. A striking picture of Webster and his eulogists! . . .

In the printed speech of Mr. Everett, you will find three feet—exactly one yard—by newspaper measurement, about the North-eastern Boundary map *with a red line on it!* but not a line, or hardly one, relating to the great treason of the 7th of March, 1850. The words he dared to speak, his friends dare not repeat; the life he dared to live, his friends dare not describe, at the foot of his statue! To mention now what he thought his great achievement will be deemed unkind!

Mr. Everett's silence was wise. He could not blame; nature denied him the courage. He was too wary to praise, for he recollected the French proverb, "Some compliments are curses."

So he obeyed the English statesman's rule, "When you have nothing to say, be sure and say nothing."

But that is the printed speech. It seems some meddlesome fellow stood within reach of the speaker, and actually circulated, it is said, petitions for the removal of the statue from the public grounds. Then the orator forgot his caution, and interpolated a few unpremeditated sentences, "very forcible and eloquent," says the press, specially intended for this critic; terming this impudent meddler "Mr. Immaculate," and quoting for his special benefit the parable of the Pharisee and Publican—"God be merciful to me a sinner!" Singular eulogy, to make out his idol a miserable "sinner"! [Laughter.] Is this the usual method, Mr. Chairman, of proving one's right to a statue? The Publican repented, and was forgiven; but is a statue, ten feet high, cast in bronze, a usual element of forgiveness? And, mark, the Publican *repented.* When did Mr. Webster repent, either in person or by the proxy of Mr. Edward Everett? We have no such record. The sin is confessed, acknowledged, as a mistake at least; but there's no repentance! . . .

Blame me not that I again open the record, Mr. Chairman. His injudicious friends will not let him die. Indeed, the heavy yoke he laid on innocent and friendless victims frets and curses them yet too keenly to allow him to be forgotten. He reaps only what he sowed. In the Talmud, the Jews have a story that Og, King of Bashan, lifted once a great rock, to hurl it on the armies of Judah. God hollowed it in the middle, letting it slip over the giant's neck, there to rest while he lived. This man lifted the Fugitive Slave Bill to hurl it, as at Syracuse, on the trembling and hunted slave, and God has hung it like a millstone about his neck forevermore. [Applause.] While the echoes of Everett's periods still lingered in our streets, as I stood with the fresh-printed sheet of his eulogy in my hand, there came to me a man, successful after eight attempts, in flying from bondage. Week after week he had been in the woods, half starved, seeking in vain a shelter. For months he had pined in dungeons, waiting the sullen step of his master. At last God blessed his eighth effort, and he stood in Boston, on his glad way from the vulture of the States

to the safe refuge of English law. He showed me his broad bosom scarred all over with the branding iron, his back one mass of record how often the lash had tortured him for his noble efforts to get free. As I looked at him, the empty and lying eulogy dropped from my nerveless hand, and I thanked God that statue and eulogy both were only a horrid nightmare, and that there were still roofs in Boston, safe shelter for these heroic children of God's right hand. [Prolonged cheering.]

But you and I, Mr. Chairman, were born in Massachusetts, and we cannot but remember that the character of the State is shown by the character of those it crowns. A brave old Englishman tells us the Greeks "had officers who did pluck down statues if they exceeded due symmetry and proportion. We need such now," he adds, "to order monuments according to men's merits." Indeed we do! Daniel Webster said, on Bunker Hill, in one of his most glorious bursts of eloquence: "That motionless shaft will be the most powerful of speakers. Its speech will be of civil and religious liberty. It will speak of patriotism and of courage. It will speak of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind. Decrepit age will lean against its base, and ingenuous youth gather round it, speak to each other of the glorious events with which it is connected, and exclaim, 'Thank God I also am an American!' " It is a glorious lesson, and the noble old shaft tells it daily.

But when ingenuous youth stand at his pedestal, what shall they say? "Consummate jurist! Alas that your latest effort was to sneer at a 'higher law'! Most able and eloquent advocate! could you find no other cause to plead than that of our lowest instincts against our highest and holiest sentiments? Alas that your last and ablest argument was the duty of hunting slaves! Sagacious statesman! Fated to die not very old, and yet live long enough to see all the plans of your manhood become obsolete ideas, except just those you had abandoned! Surely you were a great party leader! for you found the Whig Party strong, spent life in its service, and died prophesying its annihilation; found it decent, at least in profession, left it despicable in utter shamelessness; found it the natural ally of free labor and free speech, stirred it to a contest with its rival in servile bidding for Southern fellowship,

and left it despicable for the attempt, and still more despicable and ridiculous for its failure! The curses of the poor have blighted your laurels. You were mourned in ceiled houses and the marts of trade; but the dwellers in slave huts and fugitives along the highways thanked God, when you died, that they had one enemy the less. Wherever that terrible face turned, it carried gloom to the bondman. On how many a humble hearth did it cost the loftiest Christian principle to forbear calling down curses on your head!

"And yet your flatterers tell us this was the 'grandest growth of our soil and institutions!' this the noblest heart Massachusetts can offer to the world for a place beside the Phocions and the Hampdens, the Jays and the Fayettes! Thank God, then, we are not Massachusetts men!"

When I think of the long term and wide reach of his influence, and look at the subjects of his speeches—the mere shells of history, drum-and-trumpet declamation, dry law, or selfish bickerings about trade—when I think of his bartering the hopes of four millions of bondmen for the chances of his private ambition, I recall the criticism on Lord Eldon, "No man ever *did* his race so much good as Eldon *prevented.*" Again, when I remember the close of his life spent in ridiculing the antislavery movement as useless abstraction, moonshine, "mere rub-a-dub agitation," because it did not minister to trade and gain, methinks I seem to see written all over his statue Tocqueville's conclusion from his survey of French and American Democracy, *"The man who seeks freedom for anything but freedom's self, is made to be a slave!"*

Monuments, anniversaries, statues are schools, Mr. Webster tells us, whose lessons sink deep. Is this man's life a lesson which the State can commend to her sons? Professor Felton, as usual, embalmed his idol in a Greek anecdote. It is a good storehouse. Let us open it. In that great argument which gave us the two most consummate orations of antiquity, the question was whether Athens should grant Demosthenes a crown. He had fled from battle, and his counsels, though heroic, brought the city to ruin. His speech is the masterpiece of all eloquence. Of the accusation by Aeschines, it is praise enough to say that it stands second only to that. In it Aeschines warns the Athenians that in granting

crowns they judged themselves, and were forming the characters of their children. His noble burst—

Τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, ἐὰν ἐπερωτῶσιν ὑμᾶς οἱ νεώτεροι πρὸς ποῖον χρὴ παοάδειγμα, etc.—

is worth translating:

Most of all, fellow citizens, if your sons ask whose example they shall imitate, what will you say? For you know well it is not music, nor the gymnasium, nor the schools that mold young men; it is much more the public proclamations, the public example. If you take one whose life has no high purpose, one who mocks at morals, and crown him in the theatre, every boy who sees it is corrupted. When a bad man suffers his deserts, the people learn—on the contrary, when a man *votes against what is noble and just* [how exactly he describes this case!], and then comes home to teach his son, the boy will very properly say, "Your lesson is impertinent and a bore." Beware, therefore, Athenians, remembering posterity will rejudge your judgment, and that the character of a city is determined by the character of the men it crowns.

I recommend this page of Aeschines to Mr. Felton.

Has the State, then, no worthier sons that she needs import such poor material? Within her bosom rests the dust of Horace Mann, whose name hundreds of thousands of children on Western prairies, looking up to Massachusetts teachers, learn to bless. He bears the scepter of Massachusetts influence to the shores of the Pacific. When at the head of our Normal School, a colored girl was admitted, and the narrow prejudice of Newton closed every door against her, "Come to my table; let my roof, then, be your home," said Mr. Mann. [Hearty applause.] Antioch College staggered under a sixty-thousand-dollar debt. One, bearing the form of a man, came to its president, and said, "I will pay one sixth, if you will promise me no Negro shall enter its halls." "Let it perish first" was Horace Mann's reply. [Renewed and enthusiastic applause.] The legislature are asked to put his statue opposite Webster's. O no. When the emperor makes his horse a consul, honest men decline a share in the consulship. While that ill-used iron stands there, our State is in bad odor to offer statues to anybody.

At Reval, one of the Hanse towns, they will show you, in their

treasury, the sword which, two hundred years ago, beheaded a lawless baron for daring to carry off his fugitive slave from the shelter of the city walls. Our great slave hunter is beyond the reach of man's sword; but if any noble soul in the State will stir our mother Massachusetts to behead his image, we will cherish the name of that true Massachusetts boy as sacredly as they keep the brave old sword at Reval.

John Brown and Harpers Ferry

And then an incredible event revealed how far apart the Nation's sections had drifted. A North which had once vilified Garrison merely for denouncing slavery and its minions now thrilled to John Brown's effort at Harpers Ferry, in October 1859, and to his defense of himself in a Virginia court. Phillips had less reason to be bewildered by this turn of affairs than his more pacific-minded brethren. He had never been a nonresistant, and had even carried a pistol for self-defense. He could defend Brown without qualms, and without reservations. His view was Brown's: slavery was murder, and merited not consideration but resistance. With sympathy sweeping the North in Brown's behalf, only Phillips's unbridled and habitual radicalism saved him from downright popularity. Henry D. Thoreau's three obscure speeches and his lengthy arguments recorded in his Journal *were vastly more uncompromising in their total support of all Brown seemed to be and all he stood for. Thoreau scornfully arraigned "ye Garrisons" with "ye Buchanans" for refusing to recognize Brown's sublimity, and for at best defending his good, if allegedly misguided, intentions.*

Phillips, no more than Thoreau, coped with the complexities of Brown's character. But, then, abolitionism, in his person, was fighting in contemporary circumstances which included the aggressive demands of the proslavery sympathizers. Phillips did deal more ruggedly than did Thoreau with their manifestations and contemporary significance. Phillips delivered his first speech on John Brown in Henry Ward Beecher's Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York, November 1, 1859, in the presence of notables who included the Honorable Thomas Corwin, distinguished Ohio governor and Senator. Phillips's speech at the burial of John Brown, at North Elba, New York, on December 8 of that year, is less controversial if only because the body over which he spoke had been stripped by death of its obscure and doubtful aspects by an unimpeachable deportment during his trial, and by his resolute death.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Of course I do not expect—speaking from this platform, and to you— to say anything on the vital question of the hour which you have not already heard. But, when a great question divides the community, all men are called upon to vote, and I feel tonight that I am simply giving my vote. I am only saying "ditto" to what you hear from this platform day after day. And I would willingly have avoided, Ladies and Gentlemen, even at this last moment, borrowing this hour from you. I tried to do better by you. Like the Irishman in the story, I offered to hold the hat of Honorable Thomas Corwin of Ohio, [enthusiastic applause], if he would only make a speech, and, I am sorry to say, he declines, most unaccountably, this generous offer. [Laughter.] So I must fulfill my appointment, and deliver my lecture myself.

"The Lesson of the Hour?" I think the lesson of the hour is insurrection. [Sensation.] Insurrection of thought always precedes the insurrection of arms. The last twenty years have been an insurrection of thought. We seem to be entering on a new phase of this great American struggle. It seems to me that we have never accepted—as Americans, we have never accepted our own civilization. We have held back from the inference which we ought to have drawn from the admitted principles which underlie our life. We have all the timidity of the Old World, when we think of the people; we shrink back, trying to save ourselves from the inevitable might of the thoughts of the millions. The idea on the other side of the water seems to be that man is created to be taken care of by somebody else. God did not leave him fit to go alone; he is in everlasting pupilage to the wealthy and the educated. The religious or the comfortable classes are an ever-present probate court to take care of him. The Old World, therefore, has always distrusted the average conscience—the common sense of the millions.

It seems to me the idea of our civilization, underlying all American life, is that men do not need any guardian. We need no safeguard. Not only the inevitable, but the best power this side of the ocean, is the unfettered average common sense of the masses. Institutions, as we are accustomed to call them, are but pasteboard, and intended to be, against the thought of the street.

Statutes are mere milestones, telling how far yesterday's thought had traveled; and the talk of the sidewalk today is the law of the land. You may regret this; but the fact stands; and if our fathers foresaw the full effect of their principles, they must have planned and expected it. With us, Law is nothing unless close behind it stands a warm, living public opinion. Let that die or grow indifferent, and statutes are wastepaper, lack all executive force. You may frame them strong as language can make; but once change public feeling, and through them or over them rides the real wish of the people. The good sense and conscience of the masses are our only title deeds and police force. The temperance cause, the antislavery movement, and your Barnburner Party* prove this. You may sigh for a strong government, anchored in the convictions of past centuries, and able to protect the minority against the majority—able to defy the ignorance, the mistake, or the passion, as well as the high purpose, of the present hour; you may prefer the unchanging terra firma of despotism; but still the fact remains, that we are launched on the ocean of an unchained democracy, with no safety but in those laws of gravity which bind the ocean in its bed—the instinctive love of right in the popular heart—the divine sheet anchor, that the race gravitates toward right, and that the right is always safe and best. . . .

They say in Ireland that every Irishman thinks he was born sixty days too late [laughter], and that the world owes him sixty days. The consequence is, when a trader says such a thing is so much for cash, the Irishman thinks cash means to him a bill for sixty days. [Laughter.] So it is with Americans. They have no idea of absolute right. They were born since 1787, and absolute right means the truth diluted by a strong decoction of the Constitution of '89. They breathe that atmosphere; they do not want to sail outside of it; they do not attempt to reason ouside of it. Poisoned with printer's ink, or choked with cotton dust, they stare at absolute right as the dream of madmen. For the last twenty years there has been going on, more or less heeded and understood in different States, an insurrection of ideas against this limited, cribbed, cabined, isolated American civilization, an in-

* New York Democrats, Free Soilers who challenged their party's leadership in the 1848 Election. [Ed.]

surrection to restore absolute right. If you said to an American, for instance, anything in regard to temperance, slavery, or anything else, in the course of the last twenty years—anything about a principle—he ran back instantly to the safety of such a principle, to the possibility of its existing with a particular sect, with a church, with a party, with a constitution, with a law. He had not yet raised himself to the level of daring to trust justice, which is the preliminary consideration to trusting the people; for whether native depravity be true or not, it is a truth, attested by all history, that the race gravitates toward justice, and that, making fair allowance for differences of opinion, there is an inherent, essential tendency to the great English principle of fair play at the bottom of our natures. [Loud applause.]

. . . Now our object for twenty years has been to educate the mass of the American people up to that level of moral life which shall recognize that free speech carried to this extent is God's normal school, educating the American mind, throwing upon it the grave responsibility of deciding a great question, and by means of that responsibility lifting it to a higher level of intellectual and moral life. Responsibility educates, and politics is but another name for God's way of teaching the masses ethics, under the responsibility of great present interest. To educate man is God's ultimate end and purpose in all creation. Trust the people with the gravest questions, and in the long run you educate the race; while, in the process, you secure, not perfect, but the best possible institutions. Now scholarship stands on one side, and, like your Brooklyn *Eagle,* says, "This is madness!" Well, poor man, he thinks so! [Laughter.] The very difficulty of the whole matter is, that he does think so, and this normal school that we open is for him. His seat is on the lowest end of the lowest bench. [Laughter and applause.] But he only represents that very chronic distrust which pervades all that class, specially the timid educated mind of these Northern States. Anacharsis went into the forum at Athens, and heard a case argued by the great minds of the day, and saw the vote. He walked out into the streets, and somebody said to him, "What think you of Athenian liberty?" "I think," said he, "wise men argue causes, and fools decide them." Just what the timid scholar two thousand years

ago said in the streets of Athens, that which calls itself the scholarship of the United States says today of popular agitation, that it lets wise men argue questions, and fools decide them. But that unruly Athens, where fools decided the gravest questions of polity and right and wrong, where it was not safe to be just, and where property, which you had garnered up by the thrift and industry of today, might be wrung from you by the caprices of the mob tomorrow—that very Athens probably secured the greatest human happiness and nobleness of its era, invented art, and sounded for us the depths of philosophy: God lent to it the noblest intellects, and it flashes today the torch that gilds yet the mountain peaks of the Old World; while Egypt, the hunker* conservative of antiquity, where nobody dared to differ from the priest, or to be wiser than his grandfather—where men pretended to be alive, though swaddled in the graveclothes of creed and custom as close as their mummies in linen—is hid in the tomb it inhabited; and the intellect which Athens has created for us digs today those ashes to find out what hunkerism knew and did. [Cheers.] Now my idea of American civilization is that it is a second part, a repetition of that same sublime confidence in the public conscience and the public thought which made the groundwork of Grecian democracy.

We have been carrying on this insurrection of thought for thirty years. There have been various evidences of growth in education: I will tell you of one. The first evidence that a sinner, convicted of sin, and too blind or too lazy to reform, the first evidence he gives that his nature has been touched, is that he becomes a hypocrite; he has the grace to pretend to be something. Now the first evidence the American people gave of that commencing grace of hypocrisy was this: in 1831, when we commenced the antislavery agitation, the papers talked about slavery, bondage, American slavery, boldly, frankly, and bluntly. In a few years it sounded hard; it had a grating effect; the toughest throat of the hardest Democrat felt it as it came out. So they spoke of the "patriarchal institution" [laughter], then of the "domestic institution" [continued laughter], and then of the

* "Hunker" was a term of opprobrium directed at political opportunists and appeasers. [Ed.]

"peculiar institution" [laughter], and in a year or two it got beyond that. Mississippi published a report from her Senate, in which she went a stride further, and described it as "economic subordination," and baptized it by statute "warranteeism." [Renewed laughter.] A Southern Methodist bishop was taken to task for holding slaves in reality, but his Methodist brethren were not courageous enough to say "slaves" right out in meeting, and so they advised the bishop to get rid of his "impediment" [loud laughter]; and the late Mr. Rufus Choate, in the last Democratic canvass of my own State, undertaking and obliged to refer to the institutions of the South, and unwilling that his old New England lips, which had spoken so many glorious free truths, should foul their last days with the hated word, phrased it "a different type of industry." Now, hypocrisy—why, "it is the homage that Vice renders to Virtue." When men begin to weary of capital punishment, they banish the gallows inside the jailyard, and let nobody see it without a special card of invitation from the sheriff. And so they have banished slavery into pet phrases and fancy flash words. If, one hundred years hence, you should dig our Egyptian hunkerism up from the grave into which it is rapidly sinking, we should need a commentator of the true German blood to find out what all these queer, odd, peculiar imaginative paraphrases meant in this middle of the nineteenth century. This is one evidence of progress.

I believe in moral suasion. The age of bullets is over. The age of ideas is come. I think that is the rule of our age. The old Hindu dreamed, you know, that he saw the human race led out to its varied fortune. First, he saw men bitted and curbed, and the reins went back to an iron hand. But his dream changed on and on, until at last he saw men led by reins that came from the brain, and went back into an unseen hand. It was the type of governments; the first despotism, palpable, iron; and the last our government, a government of brains, a government of ideas. I believe in it—in public opinion.

Yet, let me say, in passing, I think you can make a better use of iron than forging it into chains. If you must have the metal, put it into Sharps rifles. It is a great deal better used that way than in fetters; types are better than bullets, but bullets a thou-

sand times rather than a clumsy statue of a mock great man, for hypocrites to kneel down and worship in a Statehouse yard. [Loud and renewed cheers, and great hissing.] I am so unused to hisses lately, that I have forgotten what I had to say. [Laughter and hisses.] I only know I meant what I did say. . . .

You see the great Commonwealth of Virginia fitly represented by a pyramid standing upon its apex. A Connecticut-born man entered at one corner of her dominions, and fixed his cold gray eye upon the government of Virginia, and it almost vanished in his very gaze. For it seems that Virginia, for a week, asked leave "to be" of John Brown at Harpers Ferry. [Cheers and applause.] Connecticut has sent out many a schoolmaster to the other thirty States; but never before so grand a teacher as that Litchfield-born schoolmaster at Harpers Ferry, writing as it were upon the Natural Bridge, in the face of nations, his simple copy, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God." [Loud cheers.]

I said that the lesson of the hour was insurrection. I ought not to apply that word to John Brown of Osawatomie, for there was no insurrection in his case. It is a great mistake to call him an insurgent. This principle that I have endeavored so briefly to open to you, of absolute right and wrong, states what? Just this: "Commonwealth of Virginia!" There is no such thing. Lawless, brutal force is no basis of a government, in the true sense of that word. *Quae est enim civitas?* asks Cicero. *Omnis ne conventus etiam ferorum et immanium? Omnis ne etiam, fugitivorum ac latronum congregata unum in locum multitudo?* CERTE NEGABIS. No civil society, no government, can exist except on the basis of the willing submission of all its citizens, and by the performance of the duty of rendering equal justice between man and man.

Whatever calls itself a government, and refuses that duty, or has not that assent, is no government. It is only a pirate ship. Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia! She is only a chronic insurrection. I mean exactly what I say. I am weighing my words now. She is a pirate ship, and John Brown sails the sea a Lord High Admiral of the Almighty, with his commission to sink every pirate he meets on God's ocean of the nineteenth century. [Cheers and applause.] I mean literally and exactly what I say. In God's world there are no majorities, no minorities; one, on God's side,

is a majority. You have often heard here, doubtless, and I need not tell you, the grounds of morals. The rights of that one man are as sacred as those of the miscalled Commonwealth of Virginia. Virginia is only another Algiers. The barbarous horde who gag each other, imprison women for teaching children to read, prohibit the Bible, sell men on the auction block, abolish marriage, condemn half their women to prostitution, and devote themselves to the breeding of human beings for sale, is only a larger and blacker Algiers. The only prayer of a true man for such is, "Gracious Heaven! unless they repent, send soon their Exmouth and Decatur." John Brown has twice as much right to hang Governor Wise, as Governor Wise has to hang him. [Cheers and hisses.] You see I am talking of that absolute essence of things which lives in the sight of the Eternal and the Infinite; not as men judge it in the rotten morals of the nineteenth century, among a herd of States that calls itself an empire, because it raises cotton and sells slaves. What I say is this: Harpers Ferry was the only government in that vicinity. Look at the trial. Virginia, true to herself, has shown exactly the same haste that the pirate does when he tries a man on deck, and runs him up to the yardarm. Unconsciously she is consistent. Now you do not think this today, some of you, perhaps. But I tell you what absolute History shall judge of these forms and phantoms of ours. John Brown began his life, his public life, in Kansas. The South planted that seed; it reaps the first fruit now. Twelve years ago, the great men in Washington, the Websters and the Clays, planted the Mexican war; and they reaped their appropriate fruit in General Taylor and General Pierce pushing them from their statesmen's stools. The South planted the seeds of violence in Kansas, and taught peaceful Northern men familiarity with the bowie knife and revolver. They planted nine hundred and ninety-nine seeds, and this is the first one that has flowered; this is the first drop of the coming shower. People do me the honor to say, in some of the Western papers, that this is traceable to some teachings of mine. It is too much honor to such as me. Gladly, if it were not fulsome vanity, would I clutch this laurel of having any share in the great resolute daring of that man who flung himself against an empire in behalf of justice and liberty. They were not the bravest men

who fought at Saratoga and Yorktown, in the war of 1776. O no! it was rather those who flung themselves at Lexington, few and feeble, against the embattled ranks of an empire, till then thought irresistible. Elderly men, in powdered wigs and red velvet, smoothed their ruffles, and cried, "Madmen!" Full-fed custom-house clerks said, "A pistol shot against Gibraltar!" But Captain Ingraham, under the Stars and Stripes, dictating terms to the fleet of the Caesars, was only the echo of that Lexington gun. Harpers Ferry is the Lexington of today. Up to this moment, Brown's life has been one unmixed success. Prudence, skill, courage, thrift, knowledge of his time, knowledge of his opponents, undaunted daring—he had all these. He was the man who could leave Kansas, and go into Missouri, and take eleven men, give them liberty, and bring them off on the horses which he carried with him, and two which he took as tribute from their masters in order to facilitate escape. Then, when he had passed his human *protégés* from the vulture of the United States to the safe shelter of the English lion, this is the brave, frank, and sublime truster in God's right and absolute justice, who entered his name in the city of Cleveland, "John Brown, of Kansas," advertised there two horses for sale, and stood in front of the auctioneer's stand, notifying all bidders of—what some would think—the defect in the title. [Laughter.] But he added, with nonchalance, when he told me the story, "They brought a very excellent price." [Laughter.] This is the man who, in the face of the nation, avowing his right, and laboring with what strength he had in behalf of the wronged, goes down to Harpers Ferry to follow up his work. Well, men say he failed. Every man has his Moscow. Suppose he did fail, every man meets his Waterloo at last. There are two kinds of defeat. Whether in chains or in laurels, LIBERTY knows nothing but victories. Soldiers call Bunker Hill a defeat; but Liberty dates from it, though Warren lay dead on the field. Men say the attempt did not succeed. No man can command success. Whether it was well planned, and *deserved* to succeed, we shall be able to decide when Brown is free to tell us all he knows. Suppose he did fail, in one sense, he has done a great deal still. Why, this is a decent country to live in now. [Laughter and cheers.] Actually, in this Sodom of ours, twenty-two men have been found

ready to die for an idea. God be thanked for John Brown, that he has discovered or created them! [Cheers.] I should feel some pride, if I was in Europe now, in confessing that I was an American. [Applause.] We have redeemed the long infamy of sixty years of subservience. But look back a bit. Is there anything new about this? Nothing at all. It is the natural result of anti-slavery teaching. For one, I accept it; I hoped for it. I cannot say that I prayed for it; I cannot say that I expected it. But at the same time, no sane man has looked upon this matter for twenty years, and supposed that we could go through this great moral convulsion, the great classes of society crashing and jostling against each other like frigates in a storm, and that there would not come such scenes as these.

In 1835 it was the other way. Then it was my bull that gored your ox. Then ideas came in conflict, and men of violence, men who trusted in their own right hands, men who believed in bowie knives—such sacked the city of Philadelphia; such made New York to be governed by a mob; Boston saw its mayor suppliant and kneeling to the chief of a broadcloth mob in broad daylight. It was all on that side. The natural result, the first result of this starting of ideas, is like people who get half awaked, and use the first weapons that lie at hand. The first show and unfolding of national life were the mobs of 1835. People said it served us right; we had no right to the luxury of speaking our own minds; it was too expensive; these lavish, prodigal, luxurious persons walking about here, and actually saying what they think. Why it was like speaking loud in the midst of the avalanches. To say "Liberty" in a loud tone, the Constitution of 1789 might come down—it would not do. But now things have changed. We have been talking thirty years. Twenty years we have talked everywhere, under all circumstances; we have been mobbed out of great cities, and pelted out of little ones; we have been abused by great men and by little papers. [Laughter and applause.] What is the result? The tables have been turned; it is your bull that has gored my ox now. And men who still believe in violence, the five points of whose faith are the first, the bowie knife, fire, poison, and the pistol, are ranged on the side of Liberty, and, unwilling to wait for the slow but sure steps of thought, lay on God's altar

the best they have. You cannot expect to put a real Puritan Presbyterian, as John Brown is—a regular Cromwellian dug up from two centuries—in the midst of our New England civilization, that dares not say its soul is its own, nor proclaim that it is wrong to sell a man at auction, and not have him show himself as he is. Put a hound in the presence of a deer, and he springs at his throat if he is a true bloodhound. Put a Christian in the presence of a sin, and he will spring at its throat if he is a true Christian. Into an acid we may throw white matter, but unless it is chalk, it will not produce agitation. So if in a world of sinners you were to put American Christianity, it would be calm as oil. But put one Christian, like John Brown of Osawatomie, and he makes the whole crystallize into right and wrong, and marshal themselves on one side or the other. God makes him the text, and all he asks of our comparatively cowardly lips is to preach the sermon, and say to the American people that, whether that old man succeeded in a worldly sense or not, he stood a representative of law, of government, of right, of justice, of religion, and they were a mob of murderers who gathered about him, and sought to wreak vengeance by taking his life. The banks of the Potomac, doubly dear now to history and to man! The dust of Washington rests there; and history will see forever on that riverside the brave old man on his pallet, whose dust, when God calls him hence, the Father of his Country would be proud to make room for beside his own. But if Virginia tyrants dare hang him, after this mockery of a trial, it will take two more Washingtons at least to make the name of the State anything but abominable in time to come. [Applause and hisses.] Well, I say what I really think. [Cheers, and cries of "Good! good!"] George Washington was a great man. Yet I say what I really think. And I know, Ladies and Gentlemen, that, educated as you have been by the experience of the last ten years here, you would have thought me the silliest as well as the most cowardly man in the world, if I should have come, with my twenty years behind me, and talked about anything else tonight except that great example which one man has set us on the banks of the Potomac. You expected, of course, that I should tell you my real opinion of it.

I value this element that Brown has introduced into American

politics. The South is a great power—no cowards in Virginia. [Laughter.] It was not cowardice. [Laughter.] Now, I try to speak very plain, but you will misunderstand me. There is no cowardice in Virginia. The South are not cowards. The lunatics in the Gospel were not cowards when they said, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" [Laughter.] They were brave enough, but they saw afar off. They saw the tremendous power which was entering into that charmed circle; they knew its inevitable victory. Virginia did not tremble at an old gray-headed man at Harpers Ferry; they trembled at a John Brown in every man's own conscience. He had been there many years, and, like that terrific scene which Beckford has drawn for us in his *Hall of Eblis,* where the crowd runs around, each man with an incurable wound in his bosom, and agrees not to speak of it; so the South has been running up and down its political and social life, and every man keeps his right hand pressed on the secret and incurable sore, with an understood agreement, in Church and State, that it never shall be mentioned, for fear the great ghastly fabric should come to pieces at the talismanic word. Brown uttered it; cried, "Slavery is sin! come, all true men, help pull it down," and the whole machinery trembled to its very base.

I value this movement for another reason. Did you ever see a blacksmith shoe a restless horse? If you have, you have seen him take a small cord and tie the upper lip. Ask him what he does it for, he will tell you to give the beast something to think of. [Laughter.] Now, the South has extensive schemes. She grasps with one hand a Mexico, and with the other she dictates terms to the Church, she imposes conditions on the state, she buys up Webster with a little or a promise, and Everett with nothing. [Great laughter and applause.] John Brown has given her something else to think of. He has turned her attention inwardly. He has taught her that there has been created a new element in this Northern mind; that it is not merely the thinker, that it is not merely the editor, that it is not merely the moral reformer, but the idea has pervaded all classes of society. Call them madmen if you will. Hard to tell who's mad. The world says one man is mad. John Brown said the same of the governor. You remember the madman in Edinburgh. A friend asked him what he was there

for. "Well," cried he, "they said at home that I was mad; and I said I was not; but they had the majority." [Laughter.] Just so it is in regard to John Brown. The nation says he is mad. I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober; I appeal from the American people, drunk with cotton, and the New York *Observer* [loud and long laughter], to the American people fifty years hence, when the light of civilization has had more time to penetrate, when self-interest has been rebuked by the world rising and giving its verdict on these great questions, when it is not a small band of abolitionists, but the civilization of the twentieth century, in all its varied forms, interests, and elements, which undertakes to enter the arena, and discuss this last great reform. When that day comes, what will be thought of these first martyrs, who teach us how to live and how to die?

Has the slave a right to resist his master? I will not argue that question to a people hoarse with shouting ever since July 4, 1776, that all men are created equal, that the right to liberty is inalienable, and that "resistance to tyrants is obedience to God." But may he resist to blood—with rifles? What need of proving that to a people who load down Bunker Hill with granite, and crowd their public squares with images of Washington; ay, worship the sword so blindly that, leaving their oldest statesmen idle, they go down to the bloodiest battlefield in Mexico to drag out a President? But may one help the slave resist, as Brown did? Ask Byron on his deathbed in the marshes of Missolonghi. Ask the Hudson as its waters kiss your shore, what answer they bring from the grave of Kosciusko. I hide the Connecticut Puritan behind Lafayette, bleeding at Brandywine, in behalf of a nation his rightful king forbade him to visit.

But John Brown violated the law. Yes. On yonder desk lie the inspired words of men who died violent deaths for breaking the laws of Rome. Why do you listen to them so reverently? Huss and Wickliffe violated laws; why honor them? George Washington, had he been caught before 1783, would have died on the gibbet, for breaking the laws of his sovereign. Yet I have heard that man praised within six months. Yes, you say, but these men broke *bad* laws. Just so. It is honorable, then, to break *bad* laws, and such lawbreaking history loves and God blesses! Who says,

then, that slave laws are not ten thousand times worse than any those men resisted? Whatever argument *excuses* them, makes John Brown a saint.

Suppose John Brown had not stayed at Harpers Ferry. Suppose on that momentous Monday night, when the excited imaginations of two thousand Charlestown people had enlarged him and his little band into four hundred white men and two hundred blacks, he had vanished, and when the gallant troops arrived there, two thousand strong, they had found nobody! The mountains would have been peopled with enemies; the Alleghenies would have heaved with insurrection! You never would have convinced Virginia that all Pennsylvania was not armed and on the hills. Suppose Massachusetts, free Massachusetts, had not given the world the telegraph, to flash news like sunlight over half the globe. Then Tuesday would have rolled away, while slow spreading through dazed Virginia crawled the news of this event. Meanwhile, a hundred men having rallied to Brown's side, he might have marched across the quaking State to Richmond and pardoned Governor Wise. Nat Turner's success, in 1831,* shows this would have been possible. Free thought, mother of invention, not Virginia, baffled Brown. But free thought, in the long run, strangles tyrants. Virginia has not slept sound since Nat Turner led an insurrection in 1831, and she bids fair never to have a nap now. [Laughter.]

. . . The slaves of our country have not risen, but, as in most other cases, redemption will come from the interference of a wiser, higher, more advanced civilization on its exterior. It is the almost universal record of history, and ours is a repetition of the same drama. We have awakened at last the enthusiasm of both classes—those that act from impulse and those that act from calculation. It is a libel on the Yankee to think that it includes the whole race, when you say that if you put a dollar on the other side of hell, the Yankee will spring for it at any risk [laughter]; for there is an element even in the Yankee blood which obeys

* A Negro insurrectionary effort cost a number of lives on both sides. It engendered fears which stirred up a major legislative debate between Virginians who wished to expatriate all Negroes, and defenders of the slave system. The latter's victory spelled an end to hopes for peaceful emancipation and constituted a first step toward civil war. [Ed.]

ideas; there is an impulsive, enthusiastic aspiration, something left to us from the old Puritan stock; that which made England what she was two centuries ago; that which is fated to give the closest grapple with the Slave Power today. This is an invasion by outside power. Civilization in 1600 crept along our shores, now planting her foot, and then retreating; now gaining a foothold, and then receding before barbarism, till at last came Jamestown and Plymouth, and then thirty States. Harpers Ferry is perhaps one of Raleigh's or Gosnold's colonies, vanishing and to be swept away; by and by will come the immortal one hundred, and Plymouth Rock, with "MANIFEST DESTINY" written by God's hand on their banner, and the right of unlimited "ANNEXATION" granted by Heaven itself. . . .

Thank God, I am not a citizen. You will remember, all of you, citizens of the United States, that there was not a Virginia gun fired at John Brown. Hundreds of well-armed Maryland and Virginia troops rushed to Harpers Ferry, and—went away! *You* shot him! Sixteen marines, to whom you pay eight dollars a month—your own representatives. When the disturbed State could not stand on her own legs for trembling, you went there and strengthened the feeble knees, and held up the palsied hands. Sixteen men, with the vulture of the Union above them [sensation], your representatives! It was the covenant with death and agreement with hell, which you call the Union of thirty States, that took the old man by the throat with a pirate hand; and it will be the disgrace of our civilization if a gallows is ever erected in Virginia that bears his body. "The most resolute man I ever saw," says Governor Wise, "the most daring, the coolest. I would trust his truth about any question. The sincerest!" Sincerity, courage, resolute daring, beating in a heart that feared God, and dared all to help his brother to liberty—Virginia has nothing, nothing for those qualities but a scaffold! [Applause.] In her broad dominion she can only afford him six feet for a grave! God help the Commonwealth which bids such welcome to the noblest qualities that can grace poor human nature! Yet that is the acknowledgment of Governor Wise himself! I will not dignify such a horde with the name of a *despotism;* since despotism is sometimes magnanimous. Witness Russia, covering Schamyl with

generous protection. Compare that with mad Virginia, hurrying forward this ghastly trial.

They say it cost the officers and persons in responsible positions more effort to keep hundreds of startled soldiers from shooting the five prisoners sixteen marines had made, than it cost those marines to take the armory itself. Soldiers and civilians—both alike—only a mob fancying itself a government! And mark you, I have said they were not a government. They not only are not a government, but they have not even the remotest idea of what a government is. [Laughter.] They do not begin to have the faintest conception of what a civilized government is. Here is a man arraigned before a jury, or about to be. The State of Virginia, as she calls herself, is about to try him. The first step in that trial is a jury; the second is a judge; and at the head stands the Chief Executive of the State, who holds the power to pardon murder; and yet that very Executive, who, according to the principles of the sublimest chapter in Algernon Sidney's immortal book, is bound by the very responsibility which rests on him to keep his mind impartial as to the guilt of any person arraigned, hastens down to Richmond, hurries to the platform, and proclaims to the assembled Commonwealth of Virginia, "The man is a murderer, and ought to be hanged." Almost every lip in the State might have said it except that single lip of its governor; and the moment he had uttered these words, in the theory of the English law, it was not possible to impanel an impartial jury in the Commonwealth of Virginia; it was not possible to get the materials and the machinery to try him, according to even the ugliest pattern of English jurisprudence. And yet the Governor does not know that he has written himself down *non compos,* and the Commonwealth that he governs supposes itself still a Christian polity. They have not the faintest conception of what goes to make up a government. The worst Jeffries that ever, in his most drunken hour, climbed up a lamppost in the streets of London, would not have tried a man who could not stand on his feet. There is no such record in the blackest roll of tyranny. If Jeffries could speak, he would thank God that at last his name might be taken down from the gibbet of History, since the Virginia bench has made his worst act white, set against the blackness of this modern

infamy. [Applause.] And yet the New York press daily prints the accounts of the *trial*. Trial! In the names of Holt and Somers, of Hale and Erskine, of Parsons, Marshall, and Jay, I protest against the name. *Trial* for life, in Anglo-Saxon dialect, has a proud, historic meaning. It includes indictment by impartial peers; a copy of such indictment and a list of witnesses furnished the prisoner, with ample time to scrutinize both; liberty to choose, and time to get counsel; a sound body and a sound mind to arrange one's defense; I need not add, a judge and jury impartial as the lot of humanity will admit; honored bulwarks and safeguards, each one the trophy and result of a century's struggle. Wounded, fevered, lying half unconscious on his pallet, unable to stand on his feet, the trial half finished before his first request for aid had reached his friends; no list of witnesses or knowledge of them till the crier, calling the name of some assassin of his comrades, wakes him to consciousness; the judge a tool, and the prosecutor seeking popularity by pandering to the mob; no decent form observed, and the essence of a fair trial wholly wanting, our history and law alike protest against degrading the honored name of *Jury Trial* by lending it to such an outrage as this. The Inquisition used to break every other bone in a man's body, and then lay him on a pallet, giving him neither counsel nor opportunity to consult one, and wring from his tortured mouth something like a confession, and call it a trial. But it was heaven-robed innocence compared with the trial, or what the New York press call so, that has been going on in crazed and maddened Charlestown.

I wish I could say anything worthy of the great deed which has taken place in our day—the opening of the sixth seal, the pouring out of the last vial but one on a corrupt and giant institution. I know that many men will deem me a fanatic for uttering this wholesale vituperation, as it will be called, upon a State, and this endorsement of a madman. I can only say that I have spoken on this antislavery question before the American people thirty years; that I have seen the day when this same phase of popular feeling—rifles and force—was on the other side. You remember the first time I was ever privileged to stand on this platform by the magnanimous generosity of your clergyman, when

New York was about to bully and crush out the freedom of speech at the dictation of Captain Rynders. From that day to this, the same braving of public thought has been going on from here to Kansas, until it bloomed in the events of the last three years. It has changed the whole face of the sentiment in these Northern States. You meet with the evidence of it everywhere. When the first news from Harpers Ferry came to Massachusetts, if you were riding in the cars, if you were walking in the streets, if you met a Democrat or a Whig or a Republican, no matter what his politics, it was a singular circumstance that he did not speak of the guilt of Brown, of the atrocity of the deed, as you might have expected. The first impulsive expression, the first outbreak of every man's words was, "What a pity he did not succeed! [Laughter.] What a fool he was for not going off Monday, when he had all he wanted! How strange that he did not take his victory, and march away with it!" It indicated the unconscious leavening of a sympathy with the attempt. Days followed on; they commenced what they called their trial; you met the same classes again; no man said he ought to be hanged; no man said he was guilty; no man predicated anything of his moral position; every man voluntarily and inevitably seemed to give vent to his indignation at the farce of a trial, indicative again of that unheeded, potent, unconscious, but widespread sympathy on the side of Brown.

Do you suppose that these things mean nothing? What the tender and poetic youth, as Emerson says, dreams today, and conjures up with inarticulate speech, is tomorrow the vociferated result of public opinion, and the day after is the charter of nations. The American people have begun to feel. The mute eloquence of the fugitive slave has gone up and down the highways and byways of the country; it will annex itself to the great American heart of the North, even in the most fossil state of its hunkerism, as a latent sympathy with its right side. This blow, like the first gun at Lexington, "heard around the world"—this blow at Harpers Ferry reveals men. Watch those about you, and you will see more of the temper and unconscious purpose and real moral position of men than you would imagine. This is the way nations are to be judged. Be not in a hurry; action will come soon enough from this sentiment. We stereotype feeling into intellect, and

then into statutes, and finally into national character. We have now the first stage of growth. Nature's live growths crowd out and rive dead matter. Ideas strangle statutes. Pulse beats wear down granite, whether piled in jails or capitols. The people's hearts are the only title deeds, after all. Your Barnburners said, "Patroon titles are unrighteous." Judges replied, "Such is the law." Wealth shrieked, "Vested rights!" Parties talked of Constitutions; still, the people said, "Sin." They shot a sheriff. A parrot press cried, "Anarchy!" Lawyers growled, "Murder!"—still, nobody was hung, if I recollect aright. Today, the *heart* of the Barnburner beats in the statute book of your State. John Brown's movement against slavery is exactly the same. Wait awhile, and you'll all agree with me. What is fanaticism today is the fashionable creed tomorrow, and trite as the multiplication table a week after.

John Brown has stirred those omnipotent pulses—Lydia Maria Child's is one. She says, "That dungeon is the place for me," and writes a letter in magnanimous appeal to the better nature of Governor Wise. She says in it: "John Brown is a hero; he has done a noble deed. I think he was all right; but he is sick; he is wounded; he wants a woman's nursing. I am an abolitionist; I have been so thirty years. I think slavery is a sin, and John Brown a saint; but I want to come and nurse him; and I pledge my word that if you will open his prison door, I will use the privilege, under sacred honor, only to nurse him. I enclose you a message to Brown; be sure and deliver it." And the message was, "Old man, God bless you! You have struck a noble blow; you have done a mighty work; God was with you; your heart was in the right place. I send you across five hundred miles the pulse of a woman's gratitude." And Governor Wise has opened the door, and announced to the world that she may go in. John Brown has conquered the pirate. [Applause.] Hope! there is hope everywhere. It is only the universal history:

> Right forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne;
> But that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

The Argument for Disunion

Most exciting, most controversial of all the policies which Phillips sponsored and supported was the Garrisonian creed of Disunion. The Constitution was a proslavery compact, he insisted. It sustained slavery. Federal law and troops prevented slave uprisings. Northern industry and Northern labor prevented a bankrupt slave economy from collapsing of its own weight. Association with the South put the blood of persecuted Negroes on Northern hands. Therefore, erase the infamy. Destroy a Union not worth saving. Lift the burden of slavery from Northern backs. Dissolution of the Union meant the destruction of slave power. In 1857, the Garrisonians of Massachusetts held a Disunion Convention and appealed for a national convention.

Posterity has preferred Lincoln's view: that the Union embodied too many human hopes, too many human achievements to be cast aside for a theory which might or might not prove accurate. Suppose that a separate Southern confederacy was established and created strong, resourceful leaders who not only secured their borders but carried their cause into Cuba and Mexico? What then, not only of the Union, but of the enslaved Negro millions?

Phillips's views were at least as justifiable as Thoreau's. It is difficult, without elaborate quotation, to give a full sense of the sweeping nature of Thoreau's analysis. "This most hypocritical and diabolical government," he termed the government at Washington. Such a government, he asked, was it not "fast losing its occupation and becoming contemptible to mankind?" It was the shadow of a government, he contended, "whose existence necessitates a Vigilance Committee." Thoreau not only repudiated the United States government. Unlike Phillips, who held tenaciously to his own New England heritage, Thoreau repudiated in thought and deed the government of Massachusetts. Its willingness, through public officials, to obey the Fugitive Slave Law turned him against the Commonwealth without reservation: "Rather

*than thus consent to establish a hell upon earth . . . I would touch a match to blow up earth and hell together."**

Phillips's arguments were more moderately phrased, and more readily adapted to public debate. William Jay, a distinguished, conservative abolitionist, and son of the great Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, wrote that he "rejoiced in every exposure of the demoralizing influence of the Union. I rejoice in such exposure, not as tending to bring about dissolution, but to render it unnecessary."

What Jay understood, and what Phillips and Thoreau enhanced with their mental energy and eloquence, was the critical function of vigorous public discussion of basic public policies. All understood that a mealy-mouthed search for consensus could only encourage and multiply simpletons and timeservers who would weave vain hopes at the expense of dedicated public defenders. Phillips called for disunion, but it was not his fetish. His fetish was abolition. He demanded this before Secession, and he continued to demand it after hostilities began between North and South. His "Argument for Disunion" was delivered in the Boston Music Hall, January 20, 1861, while a large part of the hall and the streets outside were occupied by a mob.

THE OFFICE of the pulpit is to teach men their duty. Wherever men's thoughts influence their laws, it is the duty of the pulpit to preach politics. If it were possible to conceive of a community whose opinions had no influence on their government, there the pulpit would have no occasion to talk of government. I never heard or knew of such a community. Though sheltered by Roman despotism, Herod and the chief priests abstained from this and that because they "feared the people." The sultan dared to murder his Janizaries only when the streets came to hate them as much as he did. The czar, at the head of a government whose constitution knows no check but poison and the dagger, yet feels the pressure of public opinion. Certainly, where pews are full of voters, no question but the sermon should be full of politics.

* Henry D. Thoreau, *Journal* (1906), Vol. VI, pp. 313 ff.; Vol. XII, pp. 400 *et seq.*

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." "The covenant with death" is annulled; "the agreement with hell" is broken to pieces. The chain which has held the slave system since 1787 is parted. Thirty years ago, Southern leaders, sixteen years ago, Northern abolitionists, announced their purpose to seek the dissolution of the American Union. Who dreamed that success would come so soon? South Carolina, bankrupt, alone, with a hundred thousand more slaves than whites, four blacks to three whites, within her borders, flings her gauntlet at the feet of twenty-five millions of people in defense of an idea, to maintain what she thinks her right. I would New England could count one State as fearless among her six! Call it not the madness of an engineer who stands in front of his cannon at the moment of discharge; call it rather the forlorn hope of the mariner, seizing plank or spar in the fury of the storm. This mistake of South Carolina is she fancies there is more chance of saving slavery outside of the Union than inside. Three States have followed her example. Probably the rest of the Slave States, or many of them, will find themselves unable to resist the infection, and then the whole merciless conspiracy of 1787 is ended, and timid men will dare to hate slavery without trembling for bread or life.

Let us look at the country, the North, the South, and the government. The South divided into three sections: First, those who hold slaves exactly as they do bank stock or land—and of course love the Union, which enables them to treat man as property—timid wealth shrinking from change, but so timid as to stand dumb. Second, those who have ruled the nation sixty years, monopolizing Presidents' chairs and Embassies; defeated now, these plan, in earnest sincerity, for another nation with Presidencies and Embassies all to themselves. Third, a class made up from these two, who cling to the Union in their hearts, but threaten loudly, well knowing the loudest threats get the best bargain.

The object of the South is a separate confederacy, hoping they can stand long enough for the North to ask for annexation on their terms.

Then comes the government, so called—in reality a conspiracy against justice and honest men; some of its members pilferers

and some traitors, the rest pilferers and traitors too. Like all outgoing administrations, they have no wish to lessen the troubles of their successors by curing the nation's hurt—rather aggravate it. They have done all the mischief in their power, and long now only to hear the clock strike twelve on the fourth day of March.

Then look at the North, divided into three sections: First, the defeated minority, glad of anything that troubles their conquerors. Second, the class of Republicans led by Seward,* offering to surrender anything to save the Union. [Applause.] Their gospel is the Constitution [applause], and the slave clause is their Sermon on the Mount. [Laughter and applause.] They think that, at the judgment day, the blacker the sins they have committed to save the Union, the clearer will be their title to heaven. Third, the rest of the Republicans, led by the *Tribune*—all honor to the *Tribune,* faithful and true!—who consider their honor pledged to fulfill in office the promises made in the canvass. Their motto is: "The Chicago platform, every inch of it; not a hairsbreadth of the Territories shall be surrendered to slavery." [Applause.] But they, too, claim the cannon's mouth to protect forts, defend the flag, and save the Union. At the head of this section, we have every reason to believe, stands Mr. Abraham Lincoln.

All these are the actors on the stage. But the foundation on which all stand divides only into two parts: those who like slavery, and mean it shall last; those who hate it, and mean it shall die. In the boiling gulf goes on the perpetual conflict of acid and alkali; all these classes are but bubbles on the surface. The upper millstone is *right,* and the lower *wrong.* Between them, governments and parchments, parties and compromises, are being slowly ground to powder.

Broadly stated, the South plans a Southern confederacy to uphold slavery, the North clings to the Union to uphold trade and secure growth. Without the Union, Mr. Seward tells us, we can neither be safe, rich, strong, nor happy. We used to think

* William H. Seward (1801-1872), distinguished New York governor and Senator, a favorite for the Presidential nomination of the Republican Party in 1860; he became Lincoln's Secretary of State. [Ed.]

justice was before thrift, and nobleness better than happiness. I place no great reliance on that prudent patriotism which is the child of interest. The *Tribune,* unusually frank, pre-eminently honorable, and lofty as has been its tone of late, still says, "Be it the business of the people everywhere to forget the Negro, and remember only the country." [Applause.]

After drifting, a dreary night of thirty years, before the hurricane, our ship of state is going to pieces on the lee shore of slavery. Everyone confesses that the poison of our body politic is slavery. European critics, in view of it, have pronounced the existence of the Union hitherto a "fortunate accident." Orators floated into fame on one inspired phrase, "irrepressible conflict." Jefferson died foreseeing that this was the rock on which we should split. Even Mr. Webster, speaking with bated breath, in the cold chill of 1850, still dared to be a statesman, and offered to meet the South on this question, suggesting a broad plan for the cure of our dread disease. But now, with the Union dropping asunder, with every brain and tongue active, we have yet to hear the first statesman word, the first proposal to consider the fountain and origin of all our ills. We look in vain through Mr. Seward's speech for one hint or suggestion as to any method of dealing with our terrible hurt. Indeed, one of his terrors of disunion is that it will give room for "an European, an uncompromising hostility to slavery." Such a hostility—the irrepressible conflict of right and wrong—William H. Seward, in 1861, pronounces "fearful!" To describe the great conflict of the age, the first of American statesmen, in the year of Garibaldi and Italy, can find no epithet but "fearful."

The servile silence of the 7th of March, 1850, is outdone, and to New York Massachusetts yields the post of infamy which her great Senator has hitherto filled. Yes, of all the doctors bending over the patient, not one dares to name his disease, except the *Tribune,* which advises him to forget it! Throughout half of the great cities of the North, everyone who touches on it is mobbed into silence! This is, indeed, the saddest feature of our times.

Let us, then, who, unlike Mr. Seward, are not afraid to tell, even now, all and just what we wish—let us look at the real nature of the crisis in which we stand. The *Tribune* says we should

"forget the Negro." It seems to me that all our past, all our present, and all our future command us at this moment to think of nothing but the Negro. [Slight laughter derisively.]

Let me tell you why. Mr. Seward says, "The first object of every human society is safety"; I think the first duty of society is JUSTICE. Alexander Hamilton said, "Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society." If any other basis of safety or gain were honest, it would be impossible. "A prosperous iniquity," says Jeremy Taylor, "is the most unprofitable condition in the world." The nation which, in moments when great moral questions disturb its peace, consults first for its own *safety,* is atheist and coward, and there are three chances out of four that it will end by being knave. We were not sent into the world to plant cities, to make Unions or save them. Seeing that all men are born equal, our first civil duty is to see that our laws treat them so. The convulsion of this hour is the effort of the nation to do this, its duty, while politicians and parties strive to balk it of its purpose. The nation agonizes this hour to recognize man as man, forgetting color, condition, sex, and creed.

Our Revolution earned us only *independence.* Whatever our fathers meant, the chief lesson of that hour was that America belongs to Americans. That generation learned it thoroughly; the second inherited it as a prejudice; we, the third, have our bones and blood made of it. When thought passes through purpose into character, it becomes the unchangeable basis of national life. That Revolutionary lesson need never be learned again, and will never die out. Let a British fleet, with admirals of the blue and red, cover our Atlantic coast, and in ten days Massachusetts and Carolina will stand shoulder to shoulder; the only rivalry, who shall die nearest the foe. [Loud applause, with cries of "Good."]

That principle is all our Revolution directly taught us. Massachusetts was hidebound in the aristocracy of classes for years after. The bar and the orthodox pulpit were our House of Lords. A Baptist clergyman was little better than a Negro. The five points of Massachusetts decency were: to trace your lineage to the *Mayflower,* graduate at Harvard College, be a good lawyer or a member of an orthodox church—either would answer [laughter] —pay your debts, and frighten your child to sleep by saying

"Thomas Jefferson." Our theological aristocracy went down before the stalwart blows of Baptist, Unitarian, and Freethinker—before Channing and Abner Kneeland. Virginia slaveholders, making theoretical democracy their passion, conquered the Federal Government, and emancipated the working classes of New England. Bitter was the cup to honest Federalism and the Essex Junto. Today, Massachusetts only holds to the lips of Carolina a beaker of the same beverage. I know no man who has analyzed this passage in our history so well as Richard Hildreth. The last thirty years have been the flowering out of this lesson. The Democratic principle, crumbling classes into men, has been working down from pulpits and judges' seats, through shopboards and shoe benches, to Irish hodmen, and reached the Negro at last. The long toil of a century cries out, *Eureka!*—"I have found it!"—the diamond of an immortal soul and an equal manhood under a black skin as truly as under a white one. For this, Leggett labored and Lovejoy died. For this, the bravest soul of the century went up to God from a Virginia scaffold. [Hisses and applause.] For this, young men gave up their May of youth, and old men the honors and ease of age. It went through the land writing history afresh, setting up and pulling down parties, riving sects, mowing down colossal reputations, making us veil our faces in shame at the baseness of our youth's idols, sending bankrupt statesmen to dishonored graves.

We stand today just as Hancock and Adams and Jefferson stood when stamp act and tea tax, Patrick Henry's eloquence and the massacre of March 5th, Otis's blood and Bunker Hill, had borne them to July, 1776. Suppose at that moment John Adams had cried out, "Now let the people everywhere forget Independence, and remember only 'God save the King'!" [Laughter.] The toil of a whole generation—thirty years—has been spent in examining this question of the rights and place of the Negro; the whole earnest thought of the nation given to it; old parties have been wrecked against it, new ones grown out of it; it stifles all other questions; the great interests of the nation necessarily suffer, men refusing to think of anything else but this; it struggles up through all compromises, asserting its right to be heard; no green withes

of eloquence or cunning, trade, pulpit, Congress, or college, succeed in binding this Samson; the business of the seaboard begs it may be settled, no matter how; the whole South is determined to have it met, proclaiming that she does not secede because of personal liberty laws or a Republican President, but because of the state of *Northern feeling* of which these are *signs*. It is not Northern laws or officers they fear, but Northern *conscience*. Why, then, should not the North accept the issue, and try to settle the question forever? You may run the Missouri line to the Pacific, but Garrison still lives; and while he does, South Carolina hates and fears Massachusetts. [Applause.] No Congressional resolves can still our brains or stifle our hearts; till you do, the slaveholder feels that New England is his natural foe. There can therefore be no real peace till we settle the slave question. If thirty years of debate have not fitted us to meet it, when shall we be able?

But the most honest Republicans say a State has no right to secede; we will show first that we have a government, and then, not before, settle disputed questions. Suppose a State has no right to secede, of what consequence is that? A Union is made up of willing States, not of conquered provinces. There are some rights, quite perfect, yet wholly incapable of being enforced. A husband or wife who can only keep the other partner within the bond by locking the doors and standing armed before them, had better submit to peaceable separation. [Applause.] A firm where one partner refuses to act has a full right to his services, but how compel them? South Carolina may be punished for her fault in going out of the Union, but that does not keep her in it. Why not recognize soberly the nature and necessity of our position? Why not, like statesmen, remember that homogeneous nations like France tend to centralization; confederacies like ours tend inevitably to dismemberment? France is the slow, still deposit of ages on central granite; only the globe's convulsion can rive it! We are the rich mud of the Mississippi; every flood shifts it from one side to the other of the channel. Nations like Austria, victim states, held under the lock and key of despotism—or like ourselves, a herd of States, hunting for their food together—must ex-

pect that any quarrel may lead to disunion. Beside, *Inter arma, silent leges*—armies care nothing for constables. This is not a case at law, but revolution.

Let us not, however, too anxiously grieve over the Union of 1787. Real Unions are not made, they grow. This was made, like an artificial waterfall or a Connecticut nutmeg. It was not an oak which today a tempest shatters. It was a wall hastily built, in hard times, of round boulders; the cement has crumbled, and the smooth stones, obeying the law of gravity, tumble here and there. Why should we seek to stop them, merely to show that we have a right and can? That were only a waste of means and temper. Let us build, like the Pyramids, a fabric which every natural law guarantees; or, better still, *plant* a Union whose life survives the ages, and quietly gives birth to its successor.

Mr. Seward's last speech, which he confesses does not express his real convictions, denies every principle but one that he proclaimed in his campaign addresses; that one—which, at Lansing, he expressly said "he was ashamed to confess"—that one is this: Everything is to be sacrificed to save the Union. I am not aware that, on any public occasion, varied and wide as have been his discussions and topics, he has ever named the truth or the virtue which he would not sacrifice to save the Union. For thirty years, there has been stormy and searching discussion of profound moral questions; one, whom his friends call our only statesman, has spoken often on all; yet he has never named the sin which he does not think would be a virtue, if it contributed to save the Union.

Remembering this element of his statesmanship, let us listen to the keynote of his late speech: "The first object of every human society is safety or security, for which, if need be, they will and they must sacrifice every other."

I will not stop to say that, even with his explanation, his principle is equivocal, and, if unlimited, false; that, unqualified, it justifies every crime, and would have prevented every glory of history; that by it, James II and Bonaparte were saints; under one sense, the Pilgrims were madmen, and under another, the Puritans did right to hang Quakers. But grant it. Suppose the Union

means wealth, culture, happiness, and safety, man has no right to buy either by crime.

Many years ago, on the floor of Congress, Kentucky and Tennessee both confessed that "the dissolution of the Union was the dissolution of slavery." Last month, Senator [Andrew] Johnson of Tennessee said: "If I were an abolitionist, and wanted to accomplish the abolition of slavery in the Southern States, the first step I would take would be to break the bonds of this Union. I believe the continuance of slavery depends on the preservation of this Union, and a compliance with all the guaranties of the Constitution." In September last (at La Crosse), Mr. Seward himself said, "What are they [the Southern States] in for but to have slavery saved for them by the Federal Union? Why would they go out, for they could not maintain and defend themselves against their own slaves?" In this last speech, he tells us it is the Union which restricts the opposition to slavery within narrow limits, and prevents it from being, like that of Europe, a "direct and uncompromising" demand for abolition.

Now, if the Union created for us a fresh Golconda every month, if it made every citizen wise as Solomon, blameless as St. John, and safe as an angel in the courts of Heaven, to cling to it would still be a damnable crime, hateful to God, while its cement was the blood of the Negro—while it, and it alone, made the crime of slaveholding possible in fifteen States.

Mr. Seward is a power in the state. It is worth while to understand his course. It cannot be caprice. His position decides that of millions. The instinct which leads him to take it shows his guess (and he rarely errs) what the majority intend. I reconcile thus the utter difference and opposition of his campaign speeches, and his last one. I think he went West, sore at the loss of the nomination, but with too much good sense, perhaps magnanimity, to act over again Webster's sullen part when Taylor stole his rights.

Still, Mr. Seward, though philosophic, though keen to analyze and unfold the theory of our politics, is not cunning in plans. He is only the hand and tongue; his brain lives in private life on the Hudson River side. Acting under that guidance, he thought

Mr. Lincoln not likely to go beyond, even if he were able to keep, the whole Chicago platform. Accordingly, he said: "I will give free rein to my natural feelings and real convictions, till these abolitionists of the Republican ranks shall cry, 'O what a mistake! We ought to have nominated Seward; another time we will not be balked.' " Hence the hot eloquence and fearless tone of those prairie speeches. He returns to Washington, finds Mr. Lincoln sturdily insisting that his honor is pledged to keep in office every promise made in the platform. Then Mr. Seward shifts his course, saying: "Since my abolitionism cannot take the wind from my rival's sails, I'll get credit as a Conservative. Accepting the premiership, I will forestall public opinion, and do all possible to bind the coming administration to a policy which I originate." He offers to postpone the whole Chicago platform, in order to save the Union—though last October, at Chicago, he told us postponement never settles anything, whether it is a lawsuit or a national question; better be beat and try again than postpone.

This speech of Mr. Seward I regard as a declaration of war against the avowed policy of the incoming President. If Lincoln were an Andrew Jackson, as his friends aver, he would dismiss Mr. Seward from his Cabinet. The incoming administration, if honest and firm, has two enemies to fight—Mr. Seward and the South.

His power is large. Already he has swept our [Charles Francis] Adams into the vortex, making him offer to sacrifice the whole Republican platform, though, as events have turned, he has sacrificed only his own personal honor. Fifteen years ago, John Quincy Adams prophesied that the Union would not last twenty years. He little thought that disunion, when it came, would swallow his son's honor in its gulf.

At such hours, New England Senators and Representatives have, from the very idea of their ultraism, little or no direct weight in Congress. But while New England is the brain of the Union, and therefore foreshadows what will be public opinion in the plastic West five years hence, it is of momentous consequence that the people here should make their real feelings known; that the pulpit and press should sound the bugle note of utter defi-

ance to slavery itself—Union or no Union, Constitution or no Constitution, freedom for every man between the oceans, and from the hot Gulf to the frozen pole! You may as well dam up Niagara with bulrushes as bind our antislavery purpose with Congressional compromise. The South knows it. While she holds out her hand for Seward's offer, she keeps her eye fixed on us, to see what we think. Let her see that we laugh it to scorn. Sacrifice anything to keep the slaveholding States in the Union? God forbid! we will rather build a bridge of gold, and pay their toll over it, accompany them out with glad noise of trumpets, and "speed the parting guest." Let them not "stand on the order of their going, but go at once"! Let them take the forts, empty our arsenals and subtreasuries, and we will lend them, beside, jewels of gold and jewels of silver, and Egypt be glad when they are departed. [Laughter and applause.]

But let the world distinctly understand why they go—to save slavery; and why we rejoice in their departure—because we know their declaration of independence is the jubilee of the slave. The eyes of the world are fixed on us as the great example of self-government. When this Union goes to pieces, it is a shock to the hopes of the struggling millions of Europe. All lies bear bitter fruit. Today is the inevitable fruit of our fathers' faithless compromise in 1787. For the sake of the future, in freedom's name, let thinking Europe understand clearly why we sever. They saw Mr. Seward paint, at Chicago, our utter demoralization, Church and State, government and people, all classes, educated and uneducated—all brought by the Slave Power, he said, to think slavery a blessing, and do anything to save it. So utter did he consider this demoralization, that he despaired of native Americans, and trusted to the hunted patriots and the refuse of Europe, which the emigrant trains bore by his house, for the salvation of the valley of the Mississippi. Today, they see that very man kneeling to that Slave Power, and begging her to take all, but only consent to grant him such a Union—Union with such a power! How, then, shall Kossuth answer, when Austria laughs him to scorn? Shall Europe see the slaveholder kick the reluctant and kneeling North out of such a Union? How, then, shall Garibaldi dare look in the face of Napoleon? If, therefore, it were

only to honor self-government, to prove that it educates men, not peddlers and cowards, let us proclaim our faith that honest labor can stand alone; its own right hand amply able to earn its bread and defend its rights [applause]; and, if it were not so, our readiness at any cost to welcome disunion when it comes bringing freedom to four millions of hapless slaves! [Applause.] What a sad comment on free institutions that they have produced a South of tyrants, and a North of cowards; a South, ready to face any peril to save slavery, and a North unwilling to risk a dollar to serve freedom?

Why do I set so little value on the Union? Because I consider it a failure; certainly, so far as slavery is concerned, it is a failure. If you doubt me, look at the picture of its effects which Mr. Seward painted at Chicago.

Look at our history. Under it, 700,000 slaves have increased to 4,000,000. We have paid $800,000,000 directly to the support of slavery. This secession will cost the Union and business $200,000,000 more. The loss which this disturbing force has brought to our trade and industry, within sixty years, it would be safe to call $500,000,000. Is the Union a pecuniary success? Under it, slavery has been strong enough to rule the nation for sixty years, and now breaks it to pieces because she can rule no longer. Under it, public morals have been so lowered, that while, at its outset, nine men out of ten were proud to be called abolitionists, now nine out of ten would deem is not only an insult, but a pecuniary injury, to be charged with being so. Ever since it existed, its friends have confessed that, to save the Union, it was necessary and proper to crush free speech. Witness John Adams's sedition laws. Witness mobs of well-dressed merchants in every Northern city now. Witness one half of the Republican Party lamenting free speech, this hour, throughout the North.

Mr. Seward confessed, at Chicago, that neither free speech nor free suffrage existed in one half of the States. No Northern man can trade, live, or talk there. For twenty years, men have been mobbed, robbed, lynched, hung, and burned there, solely for loving liberty; and while the Federal Government never lifted a finger to prevent or punish it, the very States whose citizens have been outraged have been too indifferent even to remonstrate.

Massachusetts, who once remonstrated, saw her own agent mobbed out of Charleston with her full consent.

Before the Union existed, Washington and Jefferson uttered the boldest antislavery opinions; today they would be lynched in their own homes; and their sentiments have been mobbed this very year in every great city of the North. The Fugitive Slave Bill could never have been passed nor executed in the days of Jay. Now no man who hopes for office dares to insist that it is unconstitutional. Slavery has turned our churches of Christ to churches of commerce.

John Quincy Adams, the child of our earlier civilization, said the Union was worthless, weighed against that liberty it was meant to secure. Mr. Seward, the child of the Union, says there are few men, and there ought to be few, who would not prefer saving the Union to securing freedom; and standing today at the head of nineteen millions of freemen, he confesses he does not deem it prudent to express his "most cherished convictions" on this subject,* while every honest man fears, and three fourths of Mr. Seward's followers hope, that the North, in this conflict of right and wrong, will, spite of Horace Greeley's warning, "Love liberty less than profit, dethrone conscience, and set up commerce in its stead." You know it. A Union whose despotism is so cruel and searching that one half our lawyers and one half our merchants stifle conscience for bread—in the name of Martin

* Mr. Seward said, at St. Paul, last September: "I do not believe there has been one day, since 1787, until now, when slavery had any power in this government, except what it derived from buying up men of weak virtue, no principle, and great cupidity, and terrifying men of weak nerve, in the Free States. . . . Fellow citizens, either in one way or the other, whether you agree with me in attributing it to the interposition of Divine Providence or not, this battle has been fought, this victory has been won. Slavery today is, for the first time, not only powerless, but without influence in the American republic. . . . For the first time in the history of the republic, the Slave Power has not even the power to terrify or alarm the freeman so as to make him submit, and scheme, and coincide, and compromise. It rails now with a feeble voice, as it thundered in our ears for twenty or thirty years past. With a feeble and muttering voice, they cry out that they will tear the Union to pieces. Who's afraid? They complain that, if we will not surrender our principles, and our system, and our right—being a majority— to rule, and if we will not accept their system and such rules as they will give us, they will go out of the Union. Who's afraid? Nobody's afraid; nobody can be bought." (Yet now Mr. Seward himself trembles!)

Luther and John Milton, of Algernon Sidney and Henry Vane, of John Jay and Samuel Adams, I declare such a Union a failure.

It is for the chance of saving such a Union that Mr. Seward and Mr. Adams break in Washington all the promises of the canvass, and countenance measures which stifle the conscience and confuse the moral sense of the North. Say not that my criticism is harsh. I know their pretense. It is, we must conciliate, compromise, postpone, practice finesse, make promises or break them, do anything, to gain time and concentrate the North against slavery. Our fathers tried that policy in 1787. That they miserably failed is proved by a Capitol filled with knaves and traitors, yet able to awe and ruin honest men. It was tried in 1821, and failed. It was tried in 1850, and failed. Who is audacious enough to ask another trial? The Republicans say: "Conciliate, use soft language, organize—behind the door—bands of volunteers; and when we have saved Washington, we may dare speak out." That is good policy for midnight conspirators. But if we are a government, if we are a nation, we should say: "Tell the truth! If coercion is our policy, tell the truth. Call for volunteers in every State, and vindicate the honor of the nation in the light of the sun!" [Applause.]

The cunning which equivocates today, in order to secure a peaceful inauguration on the 4th of March, will yield up all its principles before the 1st of July. Besides, when opiate speeches have dulled the Northern conscience, and kneeling speeches have let down its courage, who can be sure that even Seward's voice, if he retain the wish, can conjure up again such a North as stands face to face with Southern arrogance today?

The Union, then, is a failure. What harm can come from disunion, and what good?

The seceding States will form a Southern confederacy. We may judge of its future from the history of Mexico. The Gulf States intend to reopen the slave trade. If Kentucky and Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina secede, the opening of that trade will ruin them, and they will gravitate to us, free. Louisiana cannot secede, except on paper; the omnipotent West needs her territory, as the mouth of its river. She must stay with us as a State or a conquered province, and may have her choice. [Laugh-

ter.] Besides, she stands on sugar, and free trade bankrupts her. Consider the rest of the Slave States as one power, how can it harm us? Let us see the ground of Mr. Seward's fears. Will it increase our expenses or lessen our receipts? No; every one of those States costs the Union more than it contributes to it. Can it harm us by attacks? States without commerce or manufactures, and with an army of four millions of natural enemies encamped among them, have given bonds to keep the peace. Will they leave us so small and weak by going that we cannot stand alone? Let us see. There is no reason to suppose that the Free States, except California, will not cling together. *Idem velle, idem nolle*—to like and dislike the same things, says the Latin proverb, is friendship. When a great number of persons agree in a great number of things, that insures a union; that is not the case with the North and South, therefore we separate; that is the case with the whole North, therefore we shall remain united. How strong shall we be? Our territory will be twice as large as Austria, three times as large as France, four times as large as Spain, six times as large as Italy, seven times as large as Great Britain. Those nations have proved, for a considerable period, that they had sufficient land to stand on. Our population will be about nineteen millions—more than the Union had in 1840. I do not think we were much afraid of anybody in 1840. Our blood is largely Yankee, a race that saved Carolina from her own Tories, in the Revolution. [Laughter.] Without that hindrance, we could fight now, certainly, as well as we did then; and then, with three million men only, we measured swords with the ablest nation of Europe, and conquered. I think, therefore, we have no reason to be very nervously anxious now. Indeed, Mr. Seward's picture of the desolation and military weakness of the divided States, if intended for the North, is the emptiest lie in his speech. I said *lie;* I meant it. I will tell you why. Because one William H. Seward said, last fall, at Lansing: "We are maintaining a standing army at the heavy cost of one thousand dollars per man, and a standing navy—for what? to protect Michigan or Massachusetts, New York or Ohio? *No; there is not a nation on the face of the earth which would dare to attack these Free States, or any of them, if they were even disunited.* We are doing it in order that

slaves may not escape from Slave States into the Free, and to secure those States from domestic insurrection; and because, if we provoke a foreign foe, slavery cries out that it is in danger." Surely the speaker of those words has no right to deny that our expenses and danger will be less, and our power to meet both greater, when the Slave States are gone.

Indeed, everybody knows this. And this trembling dread of losing the Union, which so frightens the people that, in view of it, Mr. Seward, as a practical man, dares not now tell, as he says, what he really thinks and wishes, is the child of his and Webster's insincere idolatry of the Union. To serve party and personal ambition, they made a god of the Union; and today their invention returns to plague the inventors. They made the people slaves to a falsehood; and that same deluded people have turned their fetters into gags for Mr. Seward's lips. Thank God for the retribution!

But the Union created commerce; disunion will kill it.

The Union the mother of commerce? I doubt it. I question whether the genius and energy of the Yankee race are not the parent of commerce and the fountain of wealth, much more than the Union. That race, in Holland, first created a country, and then, standing on piles, called modern commerce into being. That race, in England, with territory just wide enough to keep its eastern and western harbors apart, monopolized, for centuries, the trade of the world, and annexed continents only as coffers wherein to garner its wealth. Who shall say that the same blood, with only New England for its anchorage, could not drag the wealth of the West into its harbors? Who shall say that the fertile lands of Virginia and the Mississippi enrich us because they will to do so, and not because they are compelled? As long as New England is made of granite, and the nerves of her sons of steel, she will be, as she always has been, the brain of North America, united or disunited; and harnessing the elements, steam and lightning, to her car of conquest, she will double the worth of every prairie acre by her skill, cover ocean with her canvas, and gather the wealth of the Western hemisphere into her harbors.

Despite, then, of Seward's foreboding, our confederacy will be

strong, safe, and rich. Honest it will be, and therefore happy. Its nobleness will be that, laughing at prophets, and scorning chances, it has taken the prop from the slave system and in one night the whole fabric will tumble to pieces. Disunion is abolition! That is all the value disunion has for me. I care little for forms of government or extent of territory; whether ten States or thirty make up the Union. No foreign state dare touch us, united or disunited. It matters not to me whether Massachusetts is worth one thousand millions, as now, or two thousand millions, as she might be, if she had no Carolina to feed, protect, and carry the mails for. The music of disunion to me is that at its touch the slave breaks into voice, shouting his jubilee.

What supports slavery? Northern bayonets, calming the masters' fears. Mr. Seward's words, which I have just quoted, tell you what he thinks the sole use of our army and navy. Disunion leaves God's natural laws to work their good results. God gives every animal means of self-protection. Under God's law, insurrection is the tyrant's check. Let us stand out of the path, and allow the Divine law to have free course.

Next, Northern opinion is the opiate of Southern conscience. Disunion changes that. Public opinion forms governments, and again governments react to mold opinion. Here is a government just as much permeated by slavery as China or Japan is with idolatry.

The Republican Party take possession of this government. How are they to undermine the Slave Power? That power is composed, first, of the inevitable influence of wealth, $2,000,000,000—the worth of the slaves in the Union—so much capital drawing to it the sympathy of all other capital; second, of the artificial aristocracy created by the three-fifths slave basis of the Constitution; third, by the potent and baleful prejudice of color.

The aristocracy of the Constitution! Where have you seen an aristocracy with half its power? You may take a small town here in New England, with a busy, active population of 2,500, and three or four such men as Governor Aikin, of South Carolina, riding leisurely to the polls, and throwing in their visiting cards for ballots, will blot out the entire influence of that New England town in the Federal Government. That is your Republicanism!

Then, when you add to that the element of prejudice, which is concentrated in the epithet that spells Negro with two "gg's," you make the three-strand cable of the Slave Power—the prejudice of race, the omnipotence of money, and the almost irresistible power of aristocracy. That is the Slave Power.

How is Mr. Lincoln to undermine it while in the Union? Certainly, by turning every atom of patronage and pecuniary profit in the keeping of the Federal Government to the support of freedom. You know the contrary policy has been always acted upon ever since Washington, and been openly avowed ever since Fillmore. No man was to receive any office who was not sound on the slavery question. You remember the debate in the Senate, when that was distinctly avowed to be the policy of Mr. Fillmore. You remember Mr. Clay letting it drop out accidentally, in debate, that the slaveholders had always closely watched the Cabinet, and kept a majority there, in order to preserve the ascendency of slavery. This is the policy which, in the course of fifty years, has built up the Slave Power. Now, how is the Republican Party ever to beat that power down? By reversing that policy in favor of freedom. Cassius Clay said to me, five years ago: "If you will allow me to have the patronage of this government five years, and exercise it remorselessly, down to New Orleans; never permit anyone but an avowed abolitionist to hold office under the Federal Government, I will revolutionize the Slave States themselves in two administrations." That is a scheme of efficient politics. But the Republican Party has never yet professed any such policy.

Mr. [Horace] Greeley, on the contrary, avowed, in the *Tribune,* that he had often voted for a slaveholder willingly, and he never expected the time would come when he should lay down the principle of refusing to vote for a slaveholder to office; and that sentiment has not only been reiterated by others of the Republican Party, but has never been disavowed by anyone. But suppose you could develop politics up to this idea, that the whole patronage of the government should be turned in favor of abolition; it would take two or three generations to overthrow what the Slave Power has done in sixty years, with the strength of aristocracy and the strength of prejudice on its side. With only the patronage of

the government in its control, the Republican Party must work slowly to regenerate the government against those two elements in opposition, when, with them in its favor, the Slave Power has been some sixty years in bringing about such a result as we see around us. To reverse this, and work only with the patronage of the government, it would take you long to effect the care. In my soul, I believe that a dissolution of the Union, sure to result speedily in the abolition of slavery, would be a lesser evil than the slow, faltering, diseased, gradual dying-out of slavery, constantly poisoning us with the festering remains of this corrupt political, social, and literary state. I believe a sudden, conclusive, definite disunion, resulting in the abolition of slavery, in the disruption of the Northern mind from all connection with it, all vassalage to it, *immediately*, would be a better, healthier, and more wholesome cure, than to let the Republican Party exert this gradual influence through the power of the government for thirty or sixty years. . . .

That is what I mean by disunion. I mean to take Massachusetts, and leave her exactly as she is, commercially. She shall manufacture for the South just as Lancashire does. I know what an influence the South has on the manufacturers and clergy of England; that is inevitable, in the nature of things. We have only human nature to work with, and we cannot raise it up to the level of angels. We shall never get beyond the sphere of human selfishness, but we can lift this human nature up to a higher level, if we can but remove the weight of that political relation which now rests upon it. What I would do with Massachusetts is this: I would make her, in relation to South Carolina, just what England is. I would that I could float her off, and anchor her in mid-ocean!

Severed from us, South Carolina must have a government. You see now a reign of terror, threats to raise means. That can only last a day. Some system must give support to a government. It is an expensive luxury. You must lay taxes to support it. Where will you levy your taxes? They must rest on productions. Productions are the result of skilled labor. You must educate your laborer, if you would have the means for carrying on a government. Despotisms are cheap; free governments are a dear luxury,

the machinery is complicated and expensive. If the South wants a theoretical republic, she must pay for it, she must have a basis for taxation. How will she pay for it? Why, Massachusetts, with a million workmen—men, women, and children, the little feet that can just toddle bringing chips from the woodpile—Massachusetts only pays her own board and lodging, and lays by about 4 per cent a year. And South Carolina, with one half idlers, and the other half slaves—a slave doing only half the work of a freeman, only one quarter of the population actually at work—how much do you suppose she lays up? Lays up a loss! By all the laws of political economy, she lays up bankruptcy; of course she does! Put her out, and let her see how sheltered she has been from the laws of trade by the Union! The free labor of the North pays her plantation patrol; we pay for her government, we pay for her postage, and for everything else. Launch her out, and let her see if she can make the year's ends meet! And when she tries, she must educate her labor in order to get the basis for taxation. Educate slaves! Make a locomotive with its furnaces of open wirework, fill them with anthracite coal, and when you have raised it to white heat, mount and drive it through a powder magazine, and you are safe, compared with a slaveholding community educating its slaves. But South Carolina must do it, in order to get the basis for taxation to support an independent government. The moment she does it, she removes the safeguard of slavery. What is the contest in Virginia now? Between the men who want to make their slaves mechanics, for the increased wages it will secure, and the men who oppose, for fear of the influence it will have on the general security of slave property and white throats. Just that dispute will go on, wherever the Union is dissolved. Slavery comes to an end by the laws of trade. Hang up your Sharps rifle, my valorous friend! The slave does not ask the help of your musket. He only says, like old Diogenes to Alexander, "Stand out of my light!" Just take your awkward proportions, you Yankee Democrat and Republican, out of the light and heat of God's laws of political economy, and they will melt the slave's chains away!

Indeed, I much doubt whether the South can maintain her cotton culture at all, as a separate, slaveholding government. Cotton

is only an annual in the United States. In St. Domingo and the tropics it is a tree lasting from five to twenty years. Within the Union it is, then, strictly speaking, a forced product; or at least it touches the highest northern belt of possible culture, only possible there under very favorable circumstances. We all know how hard and keen is the competition of this generation; men clutching bread only by restless hands and brains. Expose now our cotton to the full competition of India, Africa, and the tropics; burden it by taxes with the full cost of a slaveholding government, necessarily an expensive one—a tax it has never yet felt, having shirked it onto the North; quicken other cotton fields into greater activity by the unwillingness of France and England to trust their supply to States convulsed by political quarrels; and then see if, in such circumstances, the price of cotton in the markets of the world will not rule so low that to raise it by slovenly slave culture will not be utter loss—so utter as to drive it wholly from our States, at least while they remain Slave States.

Indeed, the Gulf States are essentially in a feudal condition, an aristocracy resting on slaves—no middle class. To sustain government on the costly model of our age necessitates a middle class of trading, manufacturing energy. The merchant of the nineteenth century spurns to be a subordinate. The introduction of such a class will create in the Gulf States that very irrepressible conflict which they leave us to avoid, which, alive now in the Border States, makes these unwilling to secede, which once created will soon undermine the aristocracy of the Gulf States and bring them back to us free.

Take your distorted Union, your nightmare monster, out of the light and range of these laws of trade and competition; then, without any sacrifice on your part, slavery will go to pieces! God made it a law of his universe, that villainy should always be loss; and if you will only not attempt, with your puny efforts, to stand betwixt the inevitable laws of God's kingdom, as you are doing today, and have done for sixty years, by the vigor that the industry of sixteen States has been able to infuse into the sluggish veins of the South, slavery will drop to pieces by the very influence of the competition of the nineteenth century. That is what we mean by Disunion!

That is my *coercion!* Northern pulpits cannonading the Southern conscience; Northern competition emptying its pockets: educated slaves awaking its fears; civilization and Christianity beckoning the South into their sisterhood. Soon every breeze that sweeps over Carolina will bring to our ears the music of repentance, and even she will carve on her Palmetto, "We hold this truth to be self-evident,—that all men are created equal."

All hail, then, Disunion! "Beautiful on the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." The sods of Bunker Hill shall be greener, now that their great purpose is accomplished. Sleep in peace, martyr of Harpers Ferry!—your life was not given in vain. Rejoice, spirits of Fayette and Kosciusko!—the only stain upon your swords is passing away. Soon, throughout all America, there shall be neither power nor wish to hold a slave.

The War for the Union

Phillips took his place "under the Flag." He refused to repudiate anything he had stood for or hoped for. He had, he said, never doubted the sincerity of Abraham Lincoln: "I only doubted sometimes whether he was really the head of the government. Today he is at any rate Commander in Chief." And as such Phillips proposed to support the Northern effort in the only worthwhile way he knew: by being its critic, its conscience, its reminder of things past. How else could an old-time abolitionist act? The war was bringing to the fore every species of turncoat and scoundrel: "The seaboard, the wealth, the just-converted hunkerism of the country." But behind them Phillips saw the people: "the cordwainers of Lynn, the farmers of Worcester, Ohio and Maine —the broad surface of the people who have no leisure for technicalities, who never studied law, who never had time to read any further into the Constitution than the first two lines: 'Establish Justice *and secure* Liberty.' " *Phillips believed in the people, and undertook to explicate their finer thoughts and feelings. In December 1861, in a lecture delivered in New York and Boston, he offered his analysis of the war and its possibilities, in phrases which still merit measurement against the goals and tactics of any war.*

Ladies and Gentlemen: It would be impossible for me fitly to thank you for this welcome; you will allow me, therefore, not to attempt it, but to avail myself of your patience to speak to you, as I have been invited to do, upon the war.

I know, Ladies and Gentlemen, that actions—deeds, not words —are the fitting duty of the hour. Yet, still, cannon think in this day of ours, and it is only by putting thought behind arms that we render them worthy, in any degree, of the civilization of the nineteenth century. [Applause.] Besides, the government has two thirds of a million of soldiers, and it has ships sufficient for its

purpose. The only question seems to be what the government is to do with these forces, in what path, and how far it shall tread. You and I come here tonight, not to criticize, not to find fault with the Cabinet. We come here to recognize the fact, that in moments like these the statesmanship of the Cabinet is but a pine shingle upon the rapids of Niagara, borne which way the great popular heart and the national purpose direct. It is in vain now, with these scenes about us, in this crisis, to endeavor to create public opinion; too late now to educate twenty millions of people. Our object now is to concentrate and to manifest, to make evident and to make intense, the matured purpose of the nation. We are to show the world, if it be indeed so, that democratic institutions are strong enough for such an hour as this. Very terrible as is the conspiracy, momentous as is the peril, Democracy welcomes the struggle, confident that she stands like no delicately poised throne in the Old World, but, like the Pyramid, on its broadest base, able to be patient with national evils—generously patient with the long forbearance of three generations—and strong enough when, after that they reveal themselves in their own inevitable and hideous proportions, to pronounce and execute the unanimous verdict, Death!

Now, Gentlemen, it is in such a spirit, with such a purpose, that I come before you tonight to sustain this war. Whence came this war? You and I need not curiously investigate. While Mr. Everett on one side, and Mr. Sumner on the other, agree, you and I may take for granted the opinion of two such opposite statesmen—the result of the common sense of this side of the water and the other—that slavery is the root of this war. [Applause.] I know some men have loved to trace it to disappointed ambition, to the success of the Republican Party, convincing three hundred thousand nobles at the South, who have hitherto furnished us the most of the Presidents, generals, judges, and ambassadors we needed, that they would have leave to stay at home, and that twenty millions of Northerners would take their share in public affairs. I do not think that cause equal to the result. Other men before Jefferson Davis and Governor Wise have been disappointed of the Presidency. Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and Stephen A. Douglas were more than once disappointed,

and yet who believes that either of these great men could have armed the North to avenge his wrongs? Why, then, should these pygmies of the South be able to do what the giants I have named could never achieve? Simply because there is a radical difference between the two sections, and that difference is slavery. A party victory may have been the *occasion* of this outbreak. So a tea chest was the occasion of the Revolution, and it went to the bottom of Boston harbor on the night of the 16th of December, 1773; but that tea chest was not the cause of the Revolution, neither is Jefferson Davis the cause of the rebellion. If you will look upon the map, and notice that every Slave State has joined or tried to join the rebellion, and no Free State has done so, I think you will not doubt substantially the origin of this convulsion.

Now, Ladies and Genlemen, you know me—those of you who know me at all—simply as an abolitionist. I am proud and glad that you should have known me as such. In the twenty-five years that are gone—I say it with no wish to offend any man before me—but in the quarter of a century that has passed, I could find no place where an American could stand with decent self-respect, except in constant, uncontrollable, and loud protest against the sin of his native land. But, Ladies and Gentlemen, do not imagine that I come here tonight to speak simply and exclusively as an abolitionist. My interest in this war, simply and exclusively as an abolitionist, is about as much gone as yours in a novel where the hero has won the lady, and the marriage has been comfortably celebrated in the last chapter. I know the danger of political prophecy, a kaleidoscope of which not even a Yankee can guess the next combination, but for all that, I venture to offer my opinion, that on this continent the system of domestic slavery has received its deathblow. [Loud and long-continued applause.] Let me tell you why I think so. Leaving out of view war with England, which I do not expect, there are but three paths out of this war. One is, the North conquers; the other is, the South conquers; and the third is, a compromise. Now, if the North conquers, or there be a compromise, one or the other of two things must come, either the old Constitution or a new one. I believe that, so far as the slavery clauses of the Constitution of '89 are

concerned, it is dead. It seems to me impossible that the thrifty and painstaking North, after keeping six hundred thousand men idle for two or three years, at a cost of two million dollars a day; after that flag lowered at Sumter; after Baker and Lyon and Ellsworth and Winthrop and Putnam and Wesselhoeft have given their lives to quell the rebellion; after our Massachusetts boys, hurrying from plowed field and workshop to save the capital, have been foully murdered on the pavements of Baltimore—I cannot believe in a North so lost, so craven, as to put back slavery where it stood on the 4th of March last. [Cheers.] But if there be reconstruction without those slave clauses, then in a little while, longer or shorter, slavery dies—indeed, on any other basis but the basis of '89, she has nothing else now to do but to die. On the contrary, if the South—no, I cannot say conquers, my lips will not form that word—but if she balks us of victory, the only way she can do it is to write Emancipation on her own banner, and thus bribe the friends of liberty in Europe to allow its aristocrats and traders to divide the majestic republic whose growth and trade they fear and envy. Either way, the slave goes free. Unless England flings her fleets along the coast, the South can never spring into separate existence, except from the basis of Negro freedom; and I for one cannot yet believe that the North will consent again to share his chains. Exclusively as an abolitionist, therefore, I have little more interest in this war than the frontiersman's wife had in his struggle with the bear, when she didn't care which whipped. But before I leave the abolitionists, let me say one word. Some men say we are the cause of this war. Gentlemen, you do us too much honor! If it be so, we have reason to be proud of it; for in my heart, as an American, I believe this year the most glorious of the Republic since '76. The North, craven and contented until now, like Mammon, saw nothing even in heaven but the golden pavement; today she throws off her chains. We have a North, as Daniel Webster said. This is no epoch for nations to blush at. England might blush in 1620, when Englishmen trembled at a fool's frown, and were silent when James forbade them to think; but not in 1649, when an outraged people cut off his son's head. Massachusetts might have blushed a year or two ago, when an insolent Virginian, stand-

ing on Bunker Hill, insulted the Commonwealth, and then dragged her citizens to Washington to tell what they knew about John Brown; but she has no reason to blush today, when she holds that same impudent Senator an acknowledged felon in her prison fort. In my view, the bloodiest war ever waged is infinitely better than the happiest slavery which ever fattened men into obedience. And yet I love peace. But it is real peace; not peace such as we have had; not peace that meant lynch law in the Carolinas and mob law in New York; not peace that meant chains around Boston Courthouse, a gag on the lips of statesmen, and the slave sobbing himself to sleep in curses. No more such peace for me; no peace that is not born of justice, and does not recognize the rights of every race and every man.

Some men say they would view this war as white men. I condescend to no such narrowness. I view it as an American citizen, proud to be the citizen of an empire that knows neither black nor white, neither Saxon nor Indian, but holds an equal scepter over all. [Loud cheers.] If I am to love my country, it must be lovable; if I am to honor it, it must be worthy of respect. What is the function God gives us, what is the breadth of responsibility he lays upon us? To be an empire, the home of every race, every creed, every tongue, to whose citizens is committed, if not the only, then the grandest system of pure self-government. Tocqueville tells us that all nations and all ages tend with inevitable certainty to this result; but he points out, as history does, this land as the normal school of the nations, set by God to try the experiment of popular education and popular government, to remove the obstacles, point out the dangers, find the best way, encourage the timid, and hasten the world's progress. Let us see to it, that with such a crisis and such a past, neither the ignorance, nor the heedlessness, nor the cowardice of Americans forfeits this high honor, won for us by the toils of two generations, given to us by the blessing of Providence. It is as a citizen of the leading State of this Western continent, vast in territory, and yet its territory nothing when compared with the grandeur of its past and the majesty of its future—it is as such a citizen that I wish, for one, to find out my duty, express as an individual my opinion, and aid thereby the Cabinet in doing its duty under

such responsibility. It does not lie in one man to ruin us, nor in one man to save us, nor in a dozen. It lies in the twenty millions, in the thirty millions, of thirty-four States.

Now how do we stand? In a war—not only that, but a terrific war—not a war sprung from the caprice of a woman, the spite of a priest, the flickering ambition of a prince, as wars usually have; but a war inevitable; in one sense, nobody's fault; the inevitable result of past training, the conflict of ideas, millions of people grappling each other's throats, every soldier in each camp certain that he is fighting for an idea which holds the salvation of the world, every drop of his blood in earnest. Such a war finds no parallel nearer than that of the Catholic and the Huguenot of France, or that of aristocrat and republican in 1790, or of Cromwell and the Irish, when victory meant extermination. Such is our war. I look upon it as the commencement of the great struggle between the disguised aristocracy and the democracy of America. You are to say today whether it shall last ten years or seventy, as it usually has done. It resembles closely that struggle between aristocrat and democrat which began in France in 1789, and continues still. While it lasts, it will have the same effect on the nation as that war between blind loyalty, represented by the Stuart family, and the free spirit of the English Constitution, which lasted from 1660 to 1760, and kept England a second-rate power almost all that century.

Such is the era on which you are entering. . . . But let me remind you of another tendency of the time. You know, for instance, that the writ of *habeas corpus,* by which government is bound to render a reason to the judiciary before it lays its hands upon a citizen, has been called the high-water mark of English liberty. Jefferson, in his calm moments, dreaded the power to suspend it in any emergency whatever, and wished to have it in "eternal and unremitting force." The present Napoleon, in his treatise on the English Constitution, calls it the gem of English institutions. Lieber says that *habeas corpus,* free meetings like this, and a free press, are the three elements which distinguish liberty from despotism. All that Saxon blood has gained in the battles and toils of two hundred years are these three things.

But today, Mr. Chairman, every one of them—*habeas corpus,* the right of free meeting, and a free press—is annihilated in every square mile of the Republic. We live today, every one of us, under martial law. The Secretary of State puts into his bastille, with a warrant as irresponsible as that of Louis, any man whom he pleases. And you know that neither press nor lips may venture to arraign the government without being silenced. At this moment one thousand men, at least, are "bastilled" by an authority as despotic as that of Louis, three times as many as Eldon and George III seized when they trembled for his throne. Mark me, I am not complaining. I do not say it is not necessary. It is necessary to do anything to save the ship. [Applause.] It is necessary to throw everything overboard in order that we may float. It is a mere question whether you prefer the despotism of Washington or that of Richmond. I prefer that of Washington. [Loud applause.] But, nevertheless, I point out to you this tendency, because it is momentous in its significance. We are tending with rapid strides, you say *inevitably,* I do not deny it; *necessarily,* I do not question it; we are tending toward that strong government which frightened Jefferson; toward that unlimited debt, that endless army. We have already those alien and sedition laws which, in 1798, wrecked the Federal Party, and summoned the Democratic into existence. For the first time on this continent we have passports, which even Louis Napoleon pronounces useless and odious. For the first time in our history government spies frequent our great cities. And this model of a strong government, if you reconstruct it on the old basis, is to be handed into the keeping of whom? If you compromise it by reconstruction, to whom are you to give these delicate and grave powers? To compromisers. Reconstruct this government, and for twenty years you can never elect a Republican. Presidents must be so wholly without character or principle that two angry parties, each hopeless of success, contemptuously tolerate them as neutrals. Now I am not exaggerating the moment. I can parallel it entirely. It is the same position that England held in the times of Eldon and Fox, when Holcroft and Montgomery, the poet, Horne Tooke and Frost and Hardy, went into dungeons, under laws which Pitt executed and Burke praised—times when Fox

said he despaired of English liberty but for the power of insurrection, times which Sidney Smith said he remembered when no man was entitled to an opinion who had not £3,000 a year. Why! there is no right—do I exaggerate when I say that there is no single right?—which government is scrupulous and finds itself able to protect, except the pretended right of a man to his slaves! Every other right has fallen now before the necessities of the hour.

Understand me, I do not complain of this state of things; but it is momentous. I only ask you that out of this peril you be sure to get something worthy of the crisis through which you have passed. No government of free make could stand three such trials as this. I only paint you the picture, in order, like Hotspur, to say: "Out of this nettle, danger, be you right eminently sure that you pluck the flower, safety." [Applause.] Standing in such a crisis, certainly it commands us that we should endeavor to find the root of the difficulty, and that now, once for all, we should put it beyond the possibility of troubling our peace again. We cannot afford, as Republicans, to run that risk. The vessel of state—her timbers are strained beyond almost the possibility of surviving. The tempest is one which it demands the wariest pilot to outlive. We cannot afford, thus warned, to omit anything which can save this ship of state from a second danger of the kind.

What shall we do? The answer to that question comes partly from what we think has been the cause of this convulsion. Some men think—some of your editors think, many of ours, too—that this war is nothing but the disappointment of one or two thousand angered politicians, who have persuaded eight millions of Southerners, against their convictions, to take up arms and rush to the battlefield—no great compliment to Southern sense! [Laughter.] They think that if the Federal army could only appear in the midst of this demented mass, the eight millions will find out for the first time in their lives that they have got souls of their own, tell us so, and then we shall all be piloted back, float back, drift back into the good old times of Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan. [Laughter.] There is a measure of truth in that. I believe that if, a year ago, when the thing first showed it-

self, Jefferson Davis and Toombs and Keitt and Wise, and the rest, had been hanged for traitors at Washington, and a couple of frigates anchored at Charleston, another couple in Savannah, and half a dozen in New Orleans, with orders to shell those cities on the first note of resistance, there never would have been this outbreak [applause], or it would have been postponed at least a dozen years; and if that interval had been used to get rid of slavery, we never should have heard of the convulsion. But you know we had nothing of the kind, and the consequence is, what? Why, the amazed North has been summoned by every defeat and every success, from its workshops and its factories, to gaze with wide-opened eyes at the lurid heavens, until at last, divided, bewildered, confounded, as this twenty millions were, we have all of us fused into one idea, that the Union meant justice—shall mean justice—owns down to the Gulf, and we will have it. [Applause.] What has taken place meanwhile at the South? Why, the same thing. The divided, bewildered South has been summoned also out of her divisions by every success and every defeat (and she has had more of the first than we have), and the consequence is that she too is fused into a swelling sea of State pride, hate of the North,

> Unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit nor yield.

She is in earnest, every man, and she is as unanimous as the Colonies were in the Revolution. In fact, the South recognizes more intelligibly than we do the necessities of her position. I do not consider this a secession. It is no secession. I agree with Bishop General Polk*—it is a conspiracy, not a secession. There is no wish, no intention to go peaceably and permanently off. It is a conspiracy to make the government do the will and accept the policy of the slaveholders. Its root is at the South, but it has many a branch in Wall Street and in State Street. [Cheers.] It is a conspiracy, and on the one side is every man who still thinks that he that steals his brother is a gentleman, and he that makes

* Leonidas Polk (1806-1864), churchman and soldier, wealthy Southern planter and would-be patriarch to his many slaves, he believed in the Confederate cause and served it in battle. [Ed.]

his living is not. [Applause.] It is the aristocratic element which survived the Constitution, which our fathers thought could be safely left under it, and the South today is forced into this war by the natural growth of the antagonistic principle. You may pledge whatever submission and patience of Southern institutions you please, it is not enough. South Carolina said to Massachusetts in 1835, when Edward Everett was Governor, "Abolish free speech—it is a nuisance." She is right—from her standpoint it is. [Laughter.] That is, it is not possible to preserve the quiet of South Carolina consistently with free speech; but you know the story Sir Walter Scott told of the Scotch laird, who said to his old butler, "Jock, you and I can't live under this roof." "And where does your honor think of going?" So free speech says to South Carolina today. Now I say you may pledge, compromise, guarantee what you please. The South well knows that it is not your purpose, it is your character she dreads. It is the nature of Northern institutions, the perilous freedom of discussion, the flavor of our ideas, the sight of our growth, the very neighborhood of such States, that constitutes the danger. It is like the two vases launched on the stormy sea. The iron said to the crockery, "I won't come near you." "Thank you," said the weaker vessel; "there is just as much danger in my coming near you." This the South feels; hence her determination; hence, indeed, the imperious necessity that she should rule and shape our government, or of sailing out of it. I do not mean that she plans to take possession of the North, and choose our Northern mayors; though she has done that in Boston for the last dozen years, and here [New York] till this fall. But she conspires and aims to control just so much of our policy, trade, offices, presses, pulpits, cities, as is sufficient to insure the undisturbed existence of slavery. She conspires with the full intent so to mold this government as to keep it what it has been for thirty years, according to John Quincy Adams, a plot for the extension and perpetuation of slavery. As the world advances, fresh guaranties are demanded. The nineteenth century requires sterner gags than the eighteenth. Often as the peace of Virginia is in danger, you must be willing that a Virginia Mason shall drag your citizens to Washington, and imprison them at his pleasure. So long as Carolina needs it,

you must submit that your ships he searched for dangerous passengers, and every Northern man lynched. No more Kansas rebellions. It is a conflict between the two powers, Aristocracy and Democracy, *which shall hold this belt of the continent.* You may live here, New York men, but it must be in submission to such rules as the quiet of Carolina requires. That is the meaning of the oft-repeated threat to call the roll of one's slaves on Bunker Hill, and dictate peace in Faneuil Hall. Now, in that fight, I go for the North—for the Union.

In order to make out this theory of "irrepressible conflict," it is not necessary to suppose that every Southerner hates every Northerner (as the *Atlantic Monthly* urges). But this much is true: some three hundred thousand slaveholders at the South, holding two thousand millions of so-called property in their hands, controlling the black, and befooling the seven millions of poor whites into being their tools—into believing that their interest is opposed to ours—this order of nobles, this privileged class, has been able for forty years to keep the government in dread, dictate terms by threatening disunion, bring us to its verge at least twice, and now almost to break the Union in pieces. A power thus consolidated, which has existed seventy years, setting up and pulling down parties, controlling the policy of the government, and changing our religion, and is emboldened by uniform success, will not burst like a bubble in an hour. For all practical purposes, it is safe to speak of it as the South; no other South exists, or will exist, till our policy develops it into being. This is what I mean. An aristocracy rooted in wealth, with its network spread over all social life, its poison penetrating every fiber of society, is the hardest possible evil to destroy. Its one influence, FASHION, is often able to mock at Religion, Trade, Literature, and Politics combined. One half the reason why Washington has been and is in peril—why every move is revealed and checkmated —is that your President is unfashionable, and Mrs. Jefferson Davis is not. Unseen chains are sometimes stronger than those of iron, and heavier than those of gold.

It is not in the plots, it is in the inevitable character of the Northern States that the South sees her danger. And the struggle is between these two ideas. Our fathers, as I said, thought they

could safely be left, one to outgrow the other. They took gunpowder and a lighted match, forced them into a stalwart cannon, screwed down the muzzle, and thought they could secure peace. But it has resulted differently; their cannon has exploded, and we stand among fragments.

Now some Republicans and some Democrats—not Butler and Bryant and Cochrane and Cameron, not Boutwell and Bancroft and Dickinson, and others, but the old set—the old set say to the Republicans, "Lay the pieces carefully together in their places; put the gunpowder and the match in again, say the Constitution backward instead of your prayers, and there will never be another rebellion!" I doubt it. It seems to me that like causes will produce like effects. If the reason of the war is because we are two nations, then the cure must be to make us one nation, to remove that cause which divides us, to make our institutions homogeneous. If it were possible to subjugate the South, and leave slavery just as it is, where is the security that we should not have another war in ten years? Indeed, such a course invites another war, whenever demagogues please. I believe the policy of reconstruction is impossible. And if it were possible, it would be the greatest mistake that Northern men could commit. [Cheers.] I will not stop to remind you that, standing as we do today, with the full constitutional right to abolish slavery—a right Southern treason has just given us, a right, the use of which is enjoined by the sternest necessity—if, after that, the North goes back to the Constitution of '89, she assumes, a second time, afresh, unnecessarily, a criminal responsibility for slavery. Hereafter no old excuse will avail us. A second time, with open eyes, against our highest interest, we clasp bloody hands with tyrants to uphold an acknowledged sin, whose fell evil we have fully proved.

But that aside, peace with an unchanged Constitution would leave us to stand like Mexico. States married, not matched; chained together, not melted into one; foreign nations aware of our hostility, and interfering to embroil, rob, and control us. We should be what Greece was under the intrigues of Philip, and Germany when Louis XIV was in fact her dictator. We may see our likeness in Austria, every fretful province an addition of weakness; in Italy, twenty years ago, a leash of angry hounds. A

Union with unwilling and subjugated States, smarting with defeat, and yet holding the powerful and dangerous element of slavery in it, and an army disbanded into laborers, food for constant disturbance, would be a standing invitation to France and England to insult and dictate, to thwart our policy, demand changes in our laws, and trample on us continually.

Reconstruction is but another name for the submission of the North. It is her subjection under a mask. It is nothing but the confession of defeat. Every merchant, in such a case, puts everything he has at the bidding of Wigfall and Toombs in every crossroad barroom in the South. For, you see, never till now did anybody but a few abolitionists believe that this nation could be marshaled one section against the other in arms. But the secret is out. The weak point is discovered. Why does the London press lecture us like a schoolmaster his seven-year-old boy? Why does England use a tone such as she has not used for half a century to any power? Because she knows us as she knows Mexico, as all Europe knows Austria—that we have the cancer concealed in our very vitals. Slavery, left where it is, after having created such a war as this, would leave our commerce and all our foreign relations at the mercy of any Keitt, Wigfall, Wise, or Toombs. Any demagogue has only to stir up a proslavery crusade, point back to the safe experiment of 1861, and lash the passions of the aristocrats, to cover the sea with privateers, put in jeopardy the trade of twenty States, plunge the country into millions of debt, send our stocks down 50 per cent, and cost thousands of lives. Reconstruction is but making chronic what now is transient. What that is, this week shows. What that is, we learn from the tone England dares to assume toward this divided republic. I do not believe reconstruction possible. I do not believe the Cabinet intend it. True, I should care little if they did, since I believe the Administration can no more resist the progress of events than a spear of grass can retard the step of an avalanche. But if they do, allow me to say, for one, that every dollar spent in this war is worse than wasted, every life lost is a public murder, and that any statesman who leads these States back to reconstruction will be damned to an infamy compared with which Arnold was a saint and James Buchanan a public benefactor. [Slight disturb-

ance in the rear part of the hall; cries of "Put him out!" etc.] No, do not put him out; his is the very mind I wish to reach. I said reconstruction is not possible. I do not believe it is, for this reason; the moment these States begin to appear victorious, the moment our armies do anything that evinces final success, the wily statesmanship and unconquerable hate of the South will write "Emancipation" on her banner, and welcome the protectorate of a European power. And if you read the European papers of today, you need not doubt that she will have it. Intelligent men agree that the North stands better with Palmerston for minister, than she would with any minister likely to succeed him. And who is Palmerston? While he was Foreign Secretary, from 1848 to 1851, the British press ridiculed every effort of the French Republicans—sneered at Cavaignac and Ledru Rollin, Lamartine and Hugo—while they cheered Napoleon on to his usurpation; and Lord Normanby, then Minister at Paris, early in December, while Napoleon's hand was still wet with the best blood of France, congratulated the despot on his victory over the Reds, applying to the friends of Liberty the worst epithet that an Englishman knows. This last outrage lost Palmerston his place; but he rules today—though rebuked, not changed.

The value of the English news this week is the indication of the nation's mind. No one doubts now that, should the South emancipate, England would make haste to recognize and help her. In ordinary times, the government and aristocracy of England dread American example. They may well admire and envy the strength of our government, when, instead of England's impressment and pinched levies, patriotism marshals six hundred thousand *volunteers* in six months. The English merchant is jealous of our growth; only the liberal middle classes really sympathize with us. When the two other classes are divided, this middle class rules. But now Herod and Pilate are agreed. The aristocrat, who usually despises a trader, whether of Manchester or Liverpool, as the South does a Negro, now is Secessionist from sympathy, as the trader is from interest. Such a union no middle class can checkmate. The only danger of war with England is that, as soon as England declared war with us, she would recognize the Southern Confederacy immediately, just as she stands,

slavery and all, as a military measure. As such, in the heat of passion, in the smoke of war, the English people, all of them, would allow such a recognition even of a slaveholding empire. War with England insures disunion. When England declares war, she gives slavery a fresh lease of fifty years. Even if we have no war with England, let another eight or ten months be as little successful as the last, and Europe will acknowledge the Southern Confederacy, slavery and all, as a matter of course. Further, any approach toward victory on our part, without freeing the slave, gives him free to Davis. So far, the South is sure to succeed, either by victory or defeat, unless we anticipate her. Indeed, the only way, the only sure way, to break this Union, is to try to save it by protecting slavery. "Every moment lost," as Napoleon said, "is an opportunity for misfortune." Unless we emancipate the slave, we shall never conquer the South without her trying emancipation. Every Southerner, from Toombs up to Frémont, has acknowledged it. Do you suppose that Davis and Beauregard, and the rest, mean to be exiles, wandering contemned in every great city of Europe, in order that they may maintain slavery and the Constitution of '89? They, like ourselves, will throw everything overboard before they will submit to defeat—defeat from Yankees. I do not believe, therefore, that reconciliation is possible, nor do I believe the Cabinet have any such hopes. Indeed, I do not know where you will find the evidence of *any* purpose in the Administration at Washington. [Hisses, cheers, and laughter.] If we look to the West, if we look to the Potomac, what is the policy? If, on the Potomac, with the aid of twenty governors, you assemble an army, and do nothing but return fugitive slaves, that proves you competent and efficient. If, on the banks of the Mississippi, unaided, the magic of your presence summons an army into existence, and you drive your enemy before you a hundred miles farther than your second in command thought it possible for you to advance, that proves you incompetent, and entitles your second in command to succeed you. [Tremendous applause, and three cheers for Frémont.]

Looking in another direction, you see the government announcing a policy in South Carolina. What is it? Well, Mr. Secretary Cameron says to the general in command there: "You

are to welcome into your camp all comers; you are to organize them into squads and companies; use them any way you please—but there is to be no general arming." That is a very significant exception. The hint is broad enough for the dullest brain. In one of Charles Reade's novels, the heroine flies away to hide from the hero, announcing that she never shall see him again. Her letter says: "I will never see you again, David. You, of course, won't come to see me at my old nurse's dear little cottage [laughter], between eleven in the morning and four in the afternoon, because I shan't see you." [Laughter.] So Mr. Cameron says there is to be no general arming, but I suppose there is to be a very particular arming. [Laughter.] But he goes on to add: "This is no greater interference with the institutions of South Carolina than is necessary—than the war will cure." Does he mean he will give the slaves back when the war is over? I don't know. All I know is, that the Port Royal [South Carolina] expedition proved one thing: it laid forever that ghost of an argument, that the blacks loved their masters, it settled forever the question whether the blacks were with us or with the South. My opinion is, that the blacks are the key of our position. [A voice, "That is it."] He that gets them wins, and he that loses them goes to the wall. [Applause.] Port Royal settled one thing: the blacks are with us, and not with the South. At present they are the only Unionists. I know nothing more touching in history, nothing that art will immortalize and poetry dwell upon more fondly—I know no tribute to the Stars and Stripes more impressive than that incident of the blacks coming to the waterside with their little bundles, in that simple faith which had endured through the long night of so many bitter years. They preferred to be shot rather than driven from the sight of that banner they had so long prayed to see. And if that was the result when nothing but General Sherman's equivocal proclamation was landed on the Carolinas, what should we have seen if there had been eighteen thousand veterans with Frémont, the statesman-soldier of this war, at their head [loud applause], and over them the Stars and Stripes, gorgeous with the motto, "Freedom for all! freedom forever!" If that had gone before them, in my opinion they would have marched across the Carolinas, and joined Brownlow in East

Tennessee. [Applause.] The bulwark on each side of them would have been one hundred thousand grateful blacks; they would have cut this rebellion in halves, and while our fleets fired salutes across New Orleans, Beauregard would have been ground to powder between the upper millstone of McClellan and the lower of a quarter million of blacks rising to greet the Stars and Stripes. [Great cheering.] McClellan may drill a better army—more perfect soldiers. He will never marshal a stronger force than those grateful thousands. That is the way to save insurrection. He is an enemy to civil liberty, the worst enemy to his own land, who asks for such delay or perversion of government policy as is sure to result in insurrection. Our duty is to save these four millions of blacks from their own passions, from their own confusion, and eight millions of whites from the consequences of it. ["Hear, hear!"] And in order to do it, we nineteen millions of educated, Christian Americans are not to wait for the will or the wisdom of a single man—we are not to wait for Frémont or McClellan: the government is our dictator. It might do for Rome, a herd of beggars and soldiers, kept quiet only by the weight of despotism —it might do for Rome, in moments of danger, to hurl all responsibility into the hands of a dictator. But for us, educated, thoughtful men, with institutions modeled and matured by the experience of two hundred years—it is not for us to evade responsibility by deferring to a single man. I demand of the government a policy. I demand of the government to show the doubting infidels of Europe that democracy is not only strong enough for the trial, but that she breeds men with brains large enough to comprehend the hour, and wills hot enough to fuse the purpose of nineteen millions of people into one decisive blow for safety and for Union. [Cheers.] You will ask me how it is to be done. I would have it done by Congress. We have the power.

When Congress declares war, says John Quincy Adams, Congress has all the powers incident to carrying on war. It is not an unconstitutional power, it is a power conferred by the Constitution; but the moment it comes into play it rises beyond the limit of constitutional checks. I know it is a grave power, this trusting the government with despotism. But what is the use of government, except just to help us in critical times? All the checks and

ingenuity of our institutions are arranged to secure for us men wise and able enough to be trusted with grave powers, bold enough to use them when the times require. Lancets and knives are dangerous instruments. The use of surgeons is that, when lancets are needed, somebody may know how to use them, and save life. One great merit of democratic institutions is that, resting as they must on educated masses, the government may safely be trusted, in a great emergency, with despotic power, without fear of harm, or of wrecking the state. No other form of government can venture such confidence without risk of national ruin. Doubtless the war power is a very grave power; so are some ordinary peace powers. I will not cite extreme cases—Louisiana and Texas. We obtained the first by treaty, the second by joint resolutions; each case an exercise of power as grave and despotic as the abolition of slavery would be, and, unlike that, plainly unconstitutional—one which nothing but stern necessity and subsequent acquiescence by the nation could make valid. Let me remind you that seventy years' practice has incorporated it as a principle in our constitutional law, that what the necessity of the hour demands, and the continued assent of the people ratifies, is law. Slavery has established that rule. We might surely use it in the cause of justice. But I will cite an unquestionable precedent. It was a grave power, in 1807, in time of peace, when Congress abolished commerce; when, by the embargo of Jefferson, no ship could quit New York or Boston, and Congress set no limit to the prohibition. It annihilated commerce. New England asked, "Is it constitutional?" The Supreme Court said, "Yes." New England sat down and starved. Her wharves were worthless, her ships rotted, her merchants beggared. She asked no compensation. The powers of Congress carried bankruptcy from New Haven to Portland; but the Supreme Court said, "It is legal," and New England bowed her head. We commend the same cup to the Carolinas today. We say to them that in order to save the government there resides somewhere despotism. It is in the war powers of Congress. That despotism can change the social arrangements of the Southern States, and has a right to do it. Every man of you who speaks of the emancipation of the Negroes allows it would be decisive if it were used. You allow that, when it is a

military necessity, we may use it. What I claim is, in honor of our institutions, that we are not put to wait for the wisdom or the courage of a general. Our fathers left us with no such miserable plan of government. They gave us a government with the power, in such times as these, of doing something that would save the helm of state in the hands of its citizens. [Cheers.] We could cede the Carolinas; I have sometimes wished we could shovel them into the Atlantic. [Applause and laughter.] We can cede a State. We can do anything for the time being; and no theory of government can deny its power to make the most unlimited change. The only alternative is this: Do you prefer the despotism of your own citizens or of foreigners? That is the only question in war. [Cheers.] In peace no man may be deprived of his life but "by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land." To touch life, you must have a grand jury to present, a petit jury to indict, a judge to condemn, and a sheriff to execute. That is constitutional, the necessary and invaluable bulwark of liberty, in peace. But in war the government bids Sigel shoot Lee, and the German is at once grand jury, petit jury, judge, and executioner. That, too, is constitutional, necessary, and invaluable, protecting a nation's rights and life.

Now this government, which abolishes my right of *habeas corpus*—which strikes down, because it is necessary, every Saxon bulwark of liberty, which proclaims martial law, and holds every dollar and every man at the will of the Cabinet—do you turn round and tell me that this same government has no rightful power to break the cobweb—it is but a cobweb—which binds a slave to his master, to stretch its hands across the Potomac, and root up the evil which, for seventy years, has troubled its peace, and now culminates in rebellion? I maintain, therefore, the power of the government itself to inaugurate such a policy; and I say, in order to save the Union, do justice to the black. [Applause.]

I would claim of Congress—in the exact language of Adams, of the *"government"*—a solemn act abolishing slavery throughout the Union, securing compensation to loyal slaveholders. As the Constitution forbids the States to make and allow nobles, I would now, by equal authority, forbid them to make slaves or allow slaveholders.

This has been the usual course at such times. Nations, convulsed and broken by too powerful elements or institutions, have used the first moment of assured power—the first moment that they clearly saw and fully appreciated the evil—to cut up the dangerous tree by the roots. So France expelled the Jesuits, and the Middle Ages the Templars. So England, in her great rebellion, abolished nobility and the Established Church; and the French Revolution did the same, and finally gave to each child an equal share in his deceased father's lands. For the same purpose, England, in 1745, abolished clanship in Scotland, the root of the Stuart faction; and we, in '76, abolished nobles and all tenure of estates savoring of privileged classes. Such a measure supplies the South just what she needs—capital. That sum which the North gives the loyal slaveholder, not as acknowledging his property in the slave, but a measure of conciliation—perhaps an acknowledgment of its share of the guilt—will call mills, ships, agriculture, into being. The free Negro will redeem to use lands never touched, whose fertility laughs Illinois to scorn, and finds no rival but Egypt. And remember, besides, as Montesquieu says, "The yield of land depends less on its fertility than on the freedom of its inhabitants." Such a measure binds the Negro to us by the indissoluble tie of gratitude; the loyal slaveholder, by strong self-interest—our bonds are all his property; the other whites, by prosperity—they are lifted in the scale of civilization and activity, educated and enriched. Our institutions are then homogeneous. We grapple the Union together with hooks of steel—make it as lasting as the granite which underlies the continent.

People may say this is a strange language for me, a Disunionist. Well, I was a Disunionist, sincerely, for twenty years. I did hate the Union, when Union meant lies in the pulpit and mobs in the street, when Union meant making white men hypocrites and black men slaves. [Cheers.] I did prefer purity to peace—I acknowledge it. The child of six generations of Puritans, knowing well the value of union, I did prefer disunion to being the accomplice of tyrants. But now, when I see what the Union must mean in order to last, when I see that you cannot have union without

meaning justice, and when I see twenty millions of people, with a current as swift and as inevitable as Niagara, determined that this Union shall mean justice, why should I object to it? I endeavored honestly, and am not ashamed of it, to take nineteen States out of this Union, and consecrate them to liberty, and twenty millions of people answer me back, "We like your motto, only we mean to keep thirty-four States under it." Do you suppose I am not Yankee enough to buy union when I can have it at a fair price? I know the value of union; and the reason why I claim that Carolina has no right to secede is this: we are not a partnership, we are a marriage, and we have done a great many things since we were married in 1789 which render it unjust for a State to exercise the right of revolution on any ground now alleged. I admit the right. I acknowledge the great principles of the Declaration of Independence, that a state exists for the liberty and happiness of the people, that these are the ends of government, and that, when government ceases to promote those ends, the people have a right to remodel their institutions. I acknowledge the right of revolution in South Carolina, but at the same time I acknowledge that right of revolution only when government has ceased to promote those ends. Now we have been married for seventy years. We have bought Florida. We rounded the Union to the Gulf. We bought the Mississippi for commercial purposes. We stole Texas for slave purposes. Great commercial interests, great interests of peace, have been subserved by rounding the Union into a perfect shape; and the money and sacrifices of two generations have been given for this purpose. To break up that Union now is to defraud us of mutual advantages relating to peace, trade, national security, which cannot survive disunion. The right of revolution is not matter of caprice. "Governments long established," says our Declaration of Independence, "are not to be changed for light and transient causes." When so many important interests and benefits, in their nature indivisible and which disunion destroys, have been secured by common toils and cost, the South must vindicate her revolution by showing that our government has become destructive of its proper ends, else the right of revolution does not exist. Why did we steal Texas? Why have we helped the South to strengthen

herself? Because she said that slavery within the girdle of the Constitution would die out through the influence of natural principles. She said: "We acknowledge it to be an evil; but at the same time it will end by the spread of free principles and the influence of free institutions." And the North said: "Yes; we will give you privileges on that account, and we will return your slaves for you." Every slave sent back from a Northern State is a fresh oath of the South that she would not secede. Our fathers trusted to the promise that this race should be left under the influence of the Union, until, in the maturity of time, the day should arrive when they would be lifted into the sunlight of God's equality. I claim it of South Carolina. By virtue of that pledge she took Boston and put a rope round her neck in that infamous compromise which consigned to slavery Anthony Burns. I demand the fulfillment on her part even of that infamous pledge. Until South Carolina allows me all the influence that nineteen millions of Yankee lips, asking infinite questions, have upon the welfare of those four millions of bondsmen, I deny her right to secede. [Applause.] Seventy years has the Union postponed the Negro. For seventy years has he been beguiled with the promise, as she erected one bulwark after another around slavery, that he should have the influence of our common institutions. I claim it today. Never, with my consent, while the North thinks that the Union can or shall mean justice, shall those four hundred thousand South Carolina slaves go beyond the influence of Boston ideas. That is my strong reason for clinging to the Union. This is also one main reason why, unless upon most *imperative* and *manifest* grounds of need and right, South Carolina has no right of revolution; none till she fulfills her promise in this respect.

I know how we stand today, with the frowning cannon of the English fleet ready to be thrust out of the portholes against us. But I can answer England with a better answer than William H. Seward can write. I can answer her with a more statesmanlike paper than [Secretary of War] Simon Cameron can indite. I would answer her with the Stars and Stripes floating over Charleston and New Orleans, and the itinerant Cabinet of Richmond packing up archives and wearing apparel to ride back to Mont-

gomery. There is one thing, and only one, which John Bull respects, and that is success. It is not for us to give counsel to the government on points of diplomatic propriety; but I suppose we may express our opinion; and my opinion is, that, if I were the President of these thirty-four States, while I was, I should want Mason and Slidell to stay with me. I say, then, first, as a matter of justice to the slave, we owe it to him; the day of his deliverance has come. The long promise of seventy years is to be fulfilled. The South draws back from the pledge. The North is bound, in honor of the memory of her fathers. to demand its exact fulfillment, and in order to save this Union, which now means justice and peace, to recognize the rights of four millions of its victims. This is the dictate of justice; justice, which at this hour is craftier than Seward, more statesmanlike than Cameron; justice, which appeals from the cabinets of Europe to the people; justice, which abases the proud and lifts up the humble; justice, which disarms England, saves the slaves from insurrection, and sends home the Confederate army of the Potomac to guard its own hearths; justice which gives us four millions of friends, spies, soldiers in the enemy's country, planted each one at their very hearthsides; justice, which inscribes every cannon with "Holiness to the Lord!" and puts a Northern heart behind every musket; justice, which means victory now and peace forever. To all cry of demagogues asking for boldness, I respond with the cry of "Justice, immediate, absolute justice!" And if I dared to descend to a lower level, I should say to the merchants of this metropolis, Demand of the government a speedy settlement of this question. Every hour of delay is big with risk. Remember, as Governor [George S.] Boutwell suggests, that our present financial prosperity comes because we have corn to export in place of cotton; and that another year, should Europe have a good harvest and we an ordinary one, while an inflated currency tempts extravagance and large imports, general bankruptcy stares us in the face. Do you love the Union? Do you really think that on the other side of the Potomac are the natural brothers and customers of the manufacturing ingenuity of the North? I tell you, certain as fate, God has written the safety of that relation in the same scroll with justice to the Negro. The hour strikes. You may win him to your

side; you may anticipate the South; you may save twelve millions of customers. Delay it, let God grant McClellan victory, let God grant the Stars and Stripes over New Orleans, and it is too late.

Jeff Davis will then summon that same element to his side, and twelve millions of customers are added to Lancashire and Lyons. Then commences a war of tariffs, embittered by that other war of angered nationalities, which are to hand this and the other Confederacy down for twenty-five or thirty years, divided, weakened, and bloody with intestine struggle. And what will be our character? I do not wholly agree with Edward Everett, in that very able and eloquent address which he delivered in Boston, in which, however, he said one thing pre-eminently true—he, the compromiser—that if, in 1830-31, nullification, under Jackson, had been hung instead of compromised, we never should have had Jeff Davis. [Loud applause.] I agree with him, and hope we shall make no second mistake of the kind. But I do not agree with him in the conclusion that these nineteen States, left alone, would be of necessity a second-rate power. No. I believe in brains; and I know these Northern men have more brains in their right hands than others have in their heads. [Laughter and cheers.] I know that we mix our soil with brains, and that, consequently, we are bound to conquer. Why, the waves of the ocean might as well rebel against our granite coast, or the wild bulls of the prairies against man, as either England or the South undertake to stop the march of the nineteen Free States of this continent. [Applause.]

. . . Righteousness is preservation. You who are not abolitionists do not come to this question as I did, from an interest in these four millions of black men. I came on this platform from sympathy with the Negro. I acknowledge it. You come to this question from an idolatrous regard for the Constitution of '89. But here we stand. On the other side of the ocean is England, holding out, not I think a threat of war—I do not fear it—but holding out to the South the intimation of a willingness, if she will but change her garments, and make herself decent [laughter], to take her in charge, and give her assistance and protection. There stands England, the most selfish and treacherous of modern governments. [Loud and long-continued cheers.] On the other

side of the Potomac stands a statesmanship, urged by personal and selfish interests, which cannot be matched, and between them they have but one object—it is in the end to divide the Union.

Hitherto the Negro has been a hated question. The Union moved majestic on its path, and shut him out, eclipsing him from the sun of equality and happiness. He has changed his position today. He now stands between us and the sun of our safety and prosperity, and you and I are together on the same platform—the same plank—our object to save the institutions which our fathers planted. Save them in the service of justice, in the service of peace, in the service of liberty; and in that service demand of the government at Washington that they shall mature and announce a purpose. That flag lowered at Sumter, that flight at Bull Run, will rankle in the heart of the republic for centuries. Nothing will ever medicine that wound but the government announcing to the world that it knows well whence came its trouble, and is determined to effect its cure, and, consecrating the banner to liberty, to plant it on the shores of the Gulf. [Applause.] I say in the service of the Negro; but I do not forget the white man, the eight millions of poor whites, thinking themselves our enemies, but who are really our friends. Their interests are identical with our own. An Alabama slaveholder, sitting with me a year or two ago, said:

> In our northern counties they are your friends. A man owns one slave or two slaves, and he eats with them, and sleeps in the same room (they have but one), as much as a hired man here eats with the farmer he serves. There is no difference. They are too poor to send their sons North for education. They have no newspapers, and they know nothing but what they are told by us. If you could get at them, they would be on your side, but we mean you never shall.

In Paris there are one hundred thousand men whom caricature or epigram can at any time raise to barricade the streets. Whose fault is it that such men exist? The government's; and the government under which such a mass of ignorance exists deserves to be barricaded. The government under which eight millions of people exist, so ignorant that two thousand politicians and a hundred thousand aristocrats can pervert them into rebellion,

deserves to be rebelled against. In the service of those men I mean, for one, to try to fulfill the pledge my fathers made when they said, "We will guarantee to every State a republican form of government." [Applause.] A privileged class, grown strong by the help and forbearance of the North, plots the establishment of aristocratic government in form as well as essence, conspires to rob the nonslaveholders of their civil rights. This is just the danger our national pledge was meant to meet. Our fathers' honor, national good faith, the cause of free institutions, the peace of the continent, bid us fulfill this pledge, insist on using the right it gives us to preserve the Union. . . .

Toussaint L'Ouverture

Phillips had once praised Crispus Attucks. In December 1861 he undertook to honor the great liberator of Santo Domingo, Toussaint L'Ouverture, in what became one of his most famous discourses. It still retained the uncalculated freedom of expression and indifference to conventional thinking which always left Phillips's auditors uneasy, and in this case more than uneasy, since it so unequivocally defended Negro abilities and accomplishment. But it had the literary tone and organization, the sense of drama and people, which gave Phillips title to his place in American letters, once his polemical genius had been put into social perspective. Now that all the North had become quasi-abolitionist, if only in order to embarrass the Confederacy and impugn the reputation of slaveholders, Phillips was refurbishing his program. He was spelling out the details of emancipation, underscoring the need for total Negro equality, as well as liberation. Nowhere is Phillips more the Transcendentalist come down to earth to make it habitable by living people.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I have been requested to offer you a sketch made some years since, of one of the most remarkable men of the last generation—the great St. Domingo chief, Toussaint L'Ouverture, an unmixed Negro, with no drop of white blood in his veins. My sketch is at once a biography and an argument—a biography, of course very brief, of a Negro soldier and statesman, which I offer you as an argument in behalf of the race from which

* Phillips was subject to some of the attempts at dilution which finally made an apparent bore and nuisance of Emerson to striving younger talents. "I am not aware that Wendell Phillips or William Lloyd Garrison ever claimed that the Negro race was equal in its capacity for improvement to the white race." Thus said William F. Poole, a librarian and historian, in post-Civil War years, when conventional Americans were seeking to assimilate the antislavery crusade decorously into their annals.

he sprung. I am about to compare and weigh races; indeed, I am engaged tonight in what you will think the absurd effort to convince you that the Negro race, instead of being that object of pity or contempt which we usually consider it, is entitled, judged by the facts of history, to a place close by the side of the Saxon. Now races love to be judged in two ways—by the great men they produce, and by the average merit of the mass of the race. We Saxons are proud of Bacon, Shakespeare, Hampden, Washington, Franklin, the stars we have lent to the galaxy of history; and then we turn with equal pride to the average merit of Saxon blood, since it streamed from its German home. So, again, there are three tests by which races love to be tried. The first, the basis of all, is courage—the element which says, here and today, "This continent is mine, from the Lakes to the Gulf: let him beware who seeks to divide it!" [Cheers.] And the second is the recognition that force is doubled by purpose; liberty regulated by law is the secret of Saxon progress. And the third element is persistency, endurance; first a purpose, then death or success. Of these three elements is made that Saxon pluck which has placed our race in the van of modern civilization.

In the hour you lend me tonight, I attempt the quixotic effort to convince you that the Negro blood, instead of standing at the bottom of the list, is entitled, if judged either by its great men or its masses, either by its courage, its purpose, or its endurance, to a place as near ours as any other blood known in history. And, for the purpose of my argument, I take an island, St. Domingo, about the size of South Carolina, the third spot in America upon which Columbus placed his foot. Charmed by the magnificence of its scenery and fertility of its soil, he gave it the fondest of all names, Hispaniola, Little Spain. His successor, more pious, rebaptized it from St. Dominic, St. Domingo; and when the blacks, in 1803, drove our white blood from its surface, they drove our names with us, and began the year 1804 under the old name, Haiti, the land of mountains. It was originally tenanted by filibusters, French and Spanish, of the early commercial epochs, the pirates of that day as of ours. The Spanish took the eastern two thirds, the French the western third of the island, and they gradually settled into colonies. The French, to whom my story

belongs, became the pet colony of the motherland. Guarded by peculiar privileges, enriched by the scions of wealthy houses, aided by the unmatched fertility of the soil, it soon was the richest gem in the Bourbon crown; and at the period to which I call your attention, about the era of our Constitution, 1789, its wealth was almost incredible. The effeminacy of the white race rivaled that of the Sybarite of antiquity, while the splendor of their private life outshone Versailles, and their luxury found no mate but in the mad prodigality of the Caesars. At this time the islands held about thirty thousand whites, twenty or thirty thousand mulattoes, and five hundred thousand slaves. The slave trade was active. About twenty-five thousand slaves were imported annually; and this only sufficed to fill the gap which the murderous culture of sugar annually produced. The mulattoes, as with us, were children of the slaveholders, but, unlike us, the French slaveholder never forgot his child by a bondwoman. He gave him everything but his name—wealth, rich plantations, gangs of slaves; sent him to Paris for his education, summoned the best culture of France for the instruction of his daughters, so that in 1790 the mulatto race held one third of the real estate and one quarter of the personal estate of the island. But though educated and rich, he bowed under the same yoke as with us. Subjected to special taxes, he could hold no public office, and, if convicted of any crime, was punished with double severity. His son might not sit on the same seat at school with a white boy; he might not enter a church where a white man was worshiping; if he reached a town on horseback, he must dismount and lead his horse by the bridle; and when he died, even his dust could not rest in the same soil with a white body. Such was the white race and the mulatto, the thin film of a civilization beneath which surged the dark mass of five hundred thousand slaves.

It was over such a population—the white man melted in sensuality; the mulatto feeling all the more keenly his degradation from the very wealth and culture he enjoyed; the slave, sullen and indifferent, heeding not the quarrels or the changes of the upper air—it was over this population that there burst, in 1789, the thunderstorm of the French Revolution. The first words which reached the island were the motto of the Jacobin

Club—"Liberty, Equality." The white man heard them aghast. He had read of the streets of Paris running blood. The slave heard them with indifference; it was a quarrel in the upper air, between other races, which did not concern him. The mulatto heard them with a welcome which no dread of other classes could quell. Hastily gathered into conventions, they sent to Paris a committee of the whole body, laid at the feet of the National Convention the free gift of six millions of francs, pledged one fifth of their annual rental toward the payment of the national debt, and only asked in return that this yoke of civil and social contempt should be lifted from their shoulders.

You may easily imagine the temper in which Mirabeau and Lafayette welcomed this munificent gift of the free mulattoes of the West Indies, and in which the petition for equal civil rights was received by a body which had just resolved that all men were equal. The Convention hastened to express its gratitude, and issued a decree which commences thus: "All freeborn French citizens are equal before the law." Ogé was selected—the friend of Lafayette, a lieutenant colonel in the Dutch service, the son of a wealthy mulatto woman, educated in Paris, the comrade of all the leading French Republicans—to carry the decree and the message of French democracy to the island. He landed. The decree of the National Convention was laid on the table of the General Assembly of the island. One old planter seized it, tore it in fragments, and trampled it under his feet, swearing by all the saints in the calendar that the island might sink before they would share their rights with bastards. They took an old mulatto, worth a million, who had simply asked for his rights under that decree, and hanged him. A white lawyer of seventy, who drafted the petition, they hanged at his side. They took Ogé, broke him on the wheel, ordered him to be drawn and quartered, and one quarter of his body to be hanged up in each of the four principal cities of the island; and then they adjourned.

You can conceive better than I can describe the mood in which Mirabeau and Danton received the news that their decree had been torn in pieces and trampled under foot by the petty legislature of an island colony, and their comrade drawn and quartered by the orders of its Governor. Robespierre rushed to the tribune

and shouted, "Perish the colonies rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles!" The Convention reaffirmed their decree, and sent it out a second time to be executed.

But it was not then as now, when steam has married the continents. It took months to communicate; and while this news of the death of Ogé and the defiance of the National Convention was going to France, and the answer returning, great events had taken place in the island itself. The Spanish or the eastern section, perceiving these divisions, invaded the towns of the western, and conquered many of its cities. One half of the slaveholders were republicans, in love with the new constellation which had just gone up in our Northern sky, seeking to be admitted a State in this republic, plotting for annexation. The other half were loyalists, anxious, deserted as they supposed themselves by the Bourbons, to make alliance with George III. They sent to Jamaica, and entreated its governor to assist them in their intrigue. At first, he lent them only a few hundred soldiers. Some time later, General Howe and Admiral Parker were sent with several thousand men, and finally, the English government entering more seriously into the plot, General Maitland landed with four thousand Englishmen on the north side of the island, and gained many successes. The mulattoes were in the mountains, awaiting events. They distrusted the government, which a few years before they had assisted to put down an insurrection of the whites, and which had forfeited its promise to grant them civil privileges. Deserted by both sections, Blanchelande, the governor, had left the capital, and fled for refuge to a neighboring city.

In this state of affairs, the second decree reached the island. The whites forgot their quarrel, sought out Blanchelande, and obliged him to promise that he never would publish the decree. Affrighted, the governor consented to that course, and they left him. He then began to reflect that in reality he was deposed, that the Bourbons had lost the scepter of the island. He remembered his successful appeal to the mulattoes, five years before, to put down an insurrection. Deserted now by the whites and by the mulattoes, only one force was left him in the island—that was the blacks: they had always remembered with gratitude the *code*

noir, black code, of Louis XIV, the first interference of any power in their behalf. To the blacks Blanchelande appealed. He sent a deputation to the slaves. He was aided by the agents of Count d'Artois, afterward Charles X, who was seeking to do in St. Domingo what Charles II did in Virginia (whence its name of Old Dominion), institute a reaction against the rebellion at home. The two joined forces, and sent first to Toussaint. Nature made him a Metternich, a diplomatist. He probably wished to avail himself of this offer, foreseeing advantage to his race, but to avail himself of it so cautiously as to provide against failure, risking as little as possible till the intentions of the other party had been tested, and so managing as to be able to go on or withdraw as the best interest of his race demanded. He had practiced well the Greek rule, "Know thyself," and thoroughly studied his own part. Later in life, when criticizing his great mulatto rival, Rigaud, he showed how well he knew himself. "I know Rigaud," he said; "he drops the bridle when he gallops, he shows his arm when he strikes. For me, I gallop also, but know where to stop: when I strike I am felt, not seen. Rigaud works only by blood and massacre. I know how to put the people in movement: but when I appear, all must be calm."

He said, therefore, to the envoys, "Where are your credentials?" "We have none." "I will have nothing to do with you." They then sought François and Biassou, two other slaves of strong passions, considerable intellect, and great influence over their fellow slaves, and said, "Arm, assist the government, put down the English on the one hand, and the Spanish on the other"; and on the 21st of August, 1791, fifteen thousand blacks, led by François and Biassou, supplied with arms from the arsenal of the government, appeared in the midst of the colony. It is believed that Toussaint, unwilling himself to head the movement, was still desirous that it should go forward, trusting, as proved the case, that it would result in benefit to his race. He is supposed to have advised François in his course, saving himself for a more momentous hour.

This is what Edward Everett calls the Insurrection of St. Domingo. It bore for its motto on one side of its banner, "Long live the King"; and on the other, "We claim the Old Laws."

Singular mottoes for a rebellion! In fact, it was the *posse comitatus;* it was the only French army on the island; it was the only force that had a right to bear arms; and what it undertook, it achieved. It put Blanchelande in his seat; it put the island beneath his rule. When it was done, the blacks said to the governor they had created, "Now, grant us one day in seven; give us one day's labor; we will buy another, and with the two buy a third," —the favorite method of emancipation at that time. Like the Blanchelande of five years before, he refused. He said, "Disarm! Disperse!" and the blacks answered, "The right hand that has saved you, the right hand that has saved the island for the Bourbons, may perchance clutch some of our own rights"; and they stood still. [Cheering.] This is the first insurrection, if any such there were in St. Domingo—the first determined purpose on the part of the Negro, having saved the government, to save himself.

Now let me stop a moment to remind you of one thing. I am about to open to you a chapter of bloody history—no doubt of it. Who set the example? Who dug up from its grave of a hundred years the hideous punishment of the wheel, and broke Ogé, every bone, a living man? Who flared in the face of indignant and astonished Europe the forgotten barbarity of quartering the yet palpitating body? Our race. And if the black man learned the lesson but too well, it does not lie in our lips to complain. During this whole struggle, the record is—written, mark you, by the white man, the whole picture from the pencil of the white race—that for one life the Negro took in battle, in hot and bloody fight, the white race took, in the cool malignity of revenge, three to answer for it. Notice, also, that up to this moment the slave had taken no part in the struggle, except at the bidding of the government; and even then, not for himself, but only to sustain the laws.

At this moment, then, the island stands thus: the Spaniard is on the east triumphant; the Englishman is on the northwest intrenched; the mulattoes are in the mountains waiting; the blacks are in the valleys victorious; one half the French slaveholding element is republican, the other half royalist; the white race against the mulatto and the black; the black against both; the

Frenchman against the English and Spaniard; the Spaniard against both. It is a war of races and a war of nations. At such a moment Toussaint l'Ouverture appeared.

He had been born a slave on a plantation in the north of the island, an unmixed Negro, his father stolen from Africa. If anything, therefore, that I say of him tonight moves your admiration, remember, the black race claims it all—we have no part nor lot in it. He was fifty years old at this time. An old Negro had taught him to read. His favorite books were Epictetus, Raynal, military memoirs, Plutarch. In the woods, he learned some of the qualities of herbs, and was village doctor. On the estate, the highest place he ever reached was that of coachman. At fifty, he joined the army as physician. Before he went, he placed his master and mistress on shipboard, freighted the vessel with a cargo of sugar and coffee, and sent them to Baltimore, and never afterward did he forget to send them, year by year, ample means of support. And I might add that, of all the leading Negro generals, each one saved the man under whose roof he was born, and protected the family. [Cheering.]

Let me add another thing. If I stood here tonight to tell the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I here to tell you the story of Washington, I should take it from your hearts—you, who think no marble white enough on which to carve the name of the Father of His Country. [Applause.] I am about to tell you the story of a Negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards—men who despised him as a Negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in many a battle. All the materials for his biography are from the lips of his enemies.

The second story told of him is this. About the time he reached the camp, the army had been subjected to two insults. First, their commissioners, summoned to meet the French Committee, were ignominiously and insultingly dismissed; and when, afterward, François, their general, was summoned to a second conference, and went to it on horseback, accompanied by two officers; a young lieutenant, who had known him as a slave, angered at

seeing him in the uniform of an officer, raised his riding whip and struck him over the shoulders. If he had been the savage which the Negro is painted to us, he had only to breathe the insult to his twenty-five thousand soldiers, and they would have trodden out the Frenchmen in blood. But the indignant chief rode back in silence to his tent, and it was twenty-four hours before his troops heard of this insult to their general. Then the word went forth, "Death to every white man!" They had fifteen hundred prisoners. Ranged in front of the camp, they were about to be shot. Toussaint, who had a vein of religious fanaticism, like most great leaders—like Mohammed, like Napoleon, like Cromwell, like John Brown [cheers], he could preach as well as fight—mounting a hillock, and getting the ear of the crowd, exclaimed: "Brothers, this blood will not wipe out the insult to our chief; only the blood in yonder French camp can wipe it out. To shed that is courage; to shed this is cowardice and cruelty besides"; and he saved fifteen hundred lives. [Applause.]

I cannot stop to give in detail every one of his efforts. This was in 1793. Leap with me over seven years; come to 1800; what has he achieved? He has driven the Spaniard back into his own cities, conquered him there, and put the French banner over every Spanish town; and for the first time, and almost the last, the island obeys one law. He has put the mulatto under his feet. He has attacked Maitland, defeated him in pitched battles, and permitted him to retreat to Jamaica; and when the French army rose upon Laveaux, their general, and put him in chains, Toussaint defeated them, took Laveaux out of prison, and put him at the head of his own troops. The grateful French in return named him General in Chief. *"Cet homme fait l'ouverture partout,"* said one—"This man makes an opening everywhere," —hence his soldiers named him L'Ouverture, *the opening.*

This was the work of seven years. Let us pause a moment, and find something to measure him by. You remember Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army till he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty-seven was

placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with such disadvantages, the Englishman showed the greater genius. Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to Toussaint. Cromwell never saw an army till he was forty; this man never saw a soldier till he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army—out of what? Englishmen, the best blood in Europe. Out of the middle class of Englishmen, the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered what? Englishmen, their equals. This man manufactured his army out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of Negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed, and, as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt and hurled it at what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered [cheers]; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica. [Applause.] Now if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier. I know it was a small territory; it was not as large as the continent; but it was as large as that Attica, which, with Athens for a capital, has filled the earth with its fame for two thousand years. We measure genius by quality, not by quantity.

Further—Cromwell was only a soldier; his fame stops there. Not one line in the statute book of Britain can be traced to Cromwell; not one step in the social life of England finds its motive power in his brain. The state he founded went down with him to his grave. But this man no sooner put his hand on the helm of state than the ship steadied with an upright keel, and he began to evince a statesmanship as marvelous as his military genius. History says that the most statesmanlike act of Napoleon was his proclamation of 1802, at the Peace of Amiens, when, believing that the indelible loyalty of a native-born heart is always a sufficient basis on which to found an empire, he said: "Frenchmen, come home. I pardon the crimes of the last twelve years; I blot out its parties; I found my throne on the

hearts of all Frenchmen,"—and twelve years of unclouded success showed how wisely he judged. That was in 1802. In 1800 this Negro made a proclamation; it runs thus: "Sons of St. Domingo, come home. We never meant to take your houses or your lands. The Negro only asked that liberty which God gave him. Your houses wait for you; your lands are ready; come and cultivate them"; and from Madrid and Paris, from Baltimore and New Orleans, the emigrant planters crowded home to enjoy their estates, under the pledged word that was never broken of a victorious slave. [Cheers.]

Again, Carlyle has said, "The natural king is one who melts all wills into his own." At this moment he turned to his armies—poor, ill-clad, and half-starved—and said to them: Go back and work on these estates you have conquered; for an empire can be founded only on order and industry, and you can learn these virtues only there. And they went. The French admiral, who witnessed the scene, said that in a week his army melted back into peasants.

It was 1800. The world waited fifty years before, in 1846, Robert Peel dared to venture, as a matter of practical statesmanship, the theory of free trade. Adam Smith theorized, the French statesmen dreamed, but no man at the head of affairs had ever dared to risk it as a practical measure. Europe waited till 1846 before the most practical intellect in the world, the English, adopted the great economic formula of unfettered trade. But in 1800 this black, with the instinct of statesmanship, said to the committee who were drafting for him a Constitution: "Put at the head of the chapter of commerce that the ports of St. Domingo are open to the trade of the world." [Cheers.] With lofty indifference to race, superior to all envy or prejudice, Toussaint had formed this committee of eight white proprietors and one mulatto—not a soldier nor a Negro on the list, although Haitian history proves that, with the exception of Rigaud, the rarest genius has always been shown by pure Negroes.

Again, it was 1800, at a time when England was poisoned on every page of her statute book with religious intolerance, when a man could not enter the House of Commons without taking an Episcopal communion, when every State in the Union, ex-

cept Rhode Island, was full of the intensest religious bigotry. This man was a Negro. You say that is a superstitious blood. He was uneducated. You say that makes a man narrow-minded. He was a Catholic. Many say that is but another name for intolerance. And yet—Negro, Catholic, slave—he took his place by the side of Roger Williams, and said to his committee: "Make it the first line of my Constitution that I know no difference between religious beliefs." [Applause.]

Now, blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race, go back with me to the commencement of the century, and select what statesman you please. Let him be either American or European; let him have a brain the result of six generations of culture; let him have the ripest training of university routine; let him add to it the better education of practical life; crown his temples with the silver of seventy years; and show me the man of Saxon lineage for whom his most sanguine admirer will wreathe a laurel rich as embittered foes have placed on the brow of this Negro—rare military skill, profound knowledge of human nature, content to blot out all party distinctions, and trust a state to the blood of its sons—anticipating Sir Robert Peel fifty years, and taking his station by the side of Roger Williams before any Englishman or American had won the right; and yet this is the record which the history of rival states makes up for this inspired black of St. Domingo. [Cheers.]

It was 1801. The Frenchmen who lingered on the island described its prosperity and order as almost incredible. You might trust a child with a bag of gold to go from Samana to Port-au-Prince without risk. Peace was in every household; the valleys laughed with fertility; culture climbed the mountains; the commerce of the world was represented in its harbors. At this time Europe concluded the Peace of Amiens, and Napoleon took his seat on the throne of France. He glanced his eyes across the Atlantic, and, with a single stroke of his pen, reduced Cayenne and Martinique back into chains. He then said to his Council, "What shall I do with St. Domingo?" The slaveholders said, "Give it to us." Napoleon turned to the Abbé Gregoire, "What is your opinion?" "I think those men would change their opinions, if they changed their skins." Colonel Vincent, who had been

private secretary to Toussaint, wrote a letter to Napoleon, in which he said: "Sire, leave it alone; it is the happiest spot in your dominions; God raised this man to govern; races melt under his hand. He has saved you this island; for I know of my own knowledge that, when the Republic could not have lifted a finger to prevent it, George III offered him any title and any revenue if he would hold the island under the British crown. He refused, and saved it for France." Napoleon turned away from his Council, and is said to have remarked, "I have sixty thousand idle troops; I must find them something to do." He meant to say, "I am about to seize the crown; I dare not do it in the faces of sixty thousand republican soldiers: I must give them work at a distance to do." The gossip of Paris gives another reason for his expedition against St. Domingo. It is said that the satirists of Paris had christened Toussaint, the Black Napoleon; and Bonaparte hated his black shadow. Toussaint had unfortunately once addressed him a letter, "The first of the blacks to the first of the whites." He did not like the comparison. You would think it too slight a motive. But let me remind you of the present Napoleon, that when the epigrammatists of Paris christened his wasteful and tasteless expense at Versailles, *Soulouquerie,* from the name of Soulouque, the Black Emperor, he deigned to issue a specific order forbidding the use of the word. The Napoleon blood is very sensitive. So Napoleon resolved to crush Toussaint from one motive or another, from the prompting of ambition, or dislike of this resemblance, which was very close. If either imitated the other, it must have been the white, since the Negro preceded him several years. They were very much alike, and they were very French—French even in vanity, common to both. You remember Bonaparte's vainglorious words to his soldiers at the Pyramids: "Forty centuries look down upon us." In the same mood, Toussaint said to the French captain who urged him to go to France in his frigate, "Sir, your ship is not large enough to carry me." Napoleon, you know, could never bear the military uniform. He hated the restraint of his rank; he loved to put on the gray coat of the Little Corporal, and wander in the camp. Toussaint also never could bear a uniform. He wore a plain coat, and often the yellow Madras handkerchief

of the slaves. A French lieutenant once called him a maggot in a yellow handkerchief. Toussaint took him prisoner next day, and sent him home to his mother. Like Napoleon, he could fast many days; could dictate to three secretaries at once; could wear out four or five horses. Like Napoleon, no man ever divined his purpose or penetrated his plan. He was only a Negro, and so, in him, they called it hypocrisy. In Bonaparte we style it diplomacy. For instance, three attempts made to assassinate him all failed, from not firing at the right spot. If they thought he was in the north in a carriage, he would be in the south on horseback; if they thought he was in the city in a house, he would be in the field in a tent. They once riddled his carriage with bullets; he was on horseback on the other side. The seven Frenchmen who did it were arrested. They expected to be shot. The next day was some saint's day; he ordered them to be placed before the high altar, and, when the priest reached the prayer for forgiveness, came down from his high seat, repeated it with him, and permitted them to go unpunished. [Cheers.] He had that wit common to all great commanders, which makes its way in a camp. His soldiers getting disheartened, he filled a large vase with powder, and, scattering six grains of rice in it, shook them up, and said: "See, there is the white, there is the black; what are you afraid of?" So when people came to him in great numbers for office, as it is reported they do sometimes even in Washington, he learned the first words of a Catholic prayer in Latin, and, repeating it, would say, "Do you understand that?" "No, sir." "What! want an office, and not know Latin? Go home and learn it!"

Then, again, like Napoleon—like genius always—he had confidence in his power to rule men. You remember when Bonaparte returned from Elba, and Louis XVIII sent an army against him, Bonaparte descended from his carriage, opened his coat, offering his breast to their muskets and saying, "Frenchmen, it is the Emperor!" and they ranged themselves behind him, *his* soldiers, shouting, *"Vive l'Empereur!"* That was in 1815. Twelve years before, Toussaint, finding that four of his regiments had deserted and gone to Leclerc, drew his sword, flung it on the grass, went across the field to them, folded his arms, and said, "Children,

can you point a bayonet at me?" The blacks fell on their knees, praying his pardon. His bitterest enemies watched him, and none of them charged him with love of money, sensuality, or cruel use of power. The only instance in which his sternest critic has charged him with severity is this. During a tumult, a few white proprietors who had returned, trusting his proclamation, were killed. His nephew, General Moise, was accused of indecision in quelling the riot. He assembled a court-martial, and, on its verdict, ordered his own nephew to be shot, sternly Roman in thus keeping his promise of protection to the whites. Above the lust of gold, pure in private life, generous in the use of his power, it was against such a man that Napoleon sent his army, giving to General Leclerc, the husband of his beautiful sister Pauline, thirty thousand of his best troops, with orders to reintroduce slavery. Among these soldiers came all of Toussaint's old mulatto rivals and foes.

Holland lent sixty ships. England promised by special message to be neutral; and you know neutrality means sneering at freedom and sending arms to tyrants. [Loud and long-continued applause.] England promised neutrality, and the black looked out on the whole civilized world marshaled against him. America, full of slaves, of course was hostile. Only the Yankee sold him poor muskets at a very high price. [Laughter.] Mounting his horse, and riding to the eastern end of the island, Samana, he looked out on a sight such as no native had ever seen before. Sixty ships of the line, crowded by the best soldiers of Europe, rounded the point. They were soldiers who had never yet met an equal, whose tread, like Caesar's, had shaken Europe—soldiers who had scaled the Pyramids, and planted the French banners on the walls of Rome. He looked a moment, counted the flotilla, let the reins fall on the neck of his horse, and, turning to Christophe, exclaimed: "All France is come to Haiti; they can only come to make us slaves; and we are lost!" He then recognized the only mistake of his life—his confidence in Bonaparte, which had led him to disband his army.

Returning to the hills, he issued the only proclamation which bears his name and breathes vengeance: "My children, France comes to make us slaves. God gave us liberty; France has no

right to take it away. Burn the cities, destroy the harvests, tear up the roads with cannon, poison the wells, show the white man the hell he comes to make"; and he was obeyed. [Applause.] When the great William of Orange saw Louis XIV cover Holland with troops, he said, "Break down the dikes, give Holland back to ocean"; and Europe said, "Sublime!" When Alexander saw the armies of France descend upon Russia, he said, "Burn Moscow, starve back the invaders"; and Europe said, "Sublime!" This black saw all Europe marshaled to crush him, and gave to his people the same heroic example of defiance.

It is true, the scene grows bloodier as we proceed. But, remember, the white man fitly accompanied his infamous attempt to *reduce freemen to slavery* with every bloody and cruel device that bitter and shameless hate could invent. Aristocracy is always cruel. The black man met the attempt, as every such attempt should be met, with war to the hilt. In his first struggle to gain his freedom, he had been generous and merciful, saved lives and pardoned enemies, as the people in every age and clime have always done when rising against aristocrats. Now, to save his liberty, the Negro exhausted every means, seized every weapon, and turned back the hateful invaders with a vengeance as terrible as their own, though even now he refused to be cruel.

Leclerc sent word to Christophe that he was about to land at Cape City. Christophe said, "Toussaint is governor of the island. I will send to him for permission. If without it a French soldier sets foot on shore, I will burn the town, and fight over its ashes."

Leclerc landed. Christophe took two thousand *white* men, women, and children, and carried them to the mountains in safety, then with his own hands set fire to the splendid palace which French architects had just finished for him, and in forty hours the place was in ashes. The battle was fought in its streets, and the French driven back to their boats. [Cheers.] Wherever they went, they were met with fire and sword. Once, resisting an attack, the blacks, Frenchmen born, shouted the "Marseilles Hymn," and the French soldiers stood still; they could not fight the "Marseillaise." And it was not till their officers sabered them on that they advanced, and then they were beaten. Beaten in the field, the French then took to lies. They issued proclama-

tions, saying, "We do not come to make you slaves; this man Toussaint tells you lies. Join us, and you shall have the rights you claim." They cheated every one of his officers, except Christophe and Dessalines, and his own brother Pierre, and finally these also deserted him, and he was left alone. He then sent word to Leclerc, "I will submit. I could continue the struggle for years—could prevent a single Frenchman from safely quitting your camp. But I hate bloodshed. I have fought only for the liberty of my race. Guarantee that, I will submit and come in." He took the oath to be a faithful citizen; and on the same crucifix Leclerc swore that he should be faithfully protected, and that the island should be free. As the French general glanced along the line of his splendidly equipped troops, and saw, opposite, Toussaint's ragged, ill-armed followers, he said to him, "L'Ouverture, had you continued the war, where could you have got arms?" "I would have taken yours" was the Spartan reply. [Cheers.] He went down to his house in peace; it was summer. Leclerc remembered that the fever months were coming, when his army would be in hospitals, and when one motion of that royal hand would sweep his troops into the sea. He was too dangerous to be left at large. So they summoned him to attend a council; and here is the only charge made against him—the only charge. They say he was fool enough to go. Grant it; what was the record? The white man lies shrewdly to cheat the Negro. Knight-errantry was truth. The foulest insult you can offer a man since the Crusades is, You lie. Of Toussaint, Hermona, the Spanish general, who knew him well, said, "He was the purest soul God ever put into a body." Of him history bears witness, "He never broke his word." Maitland was traveling in the depths of the woods to meet Toussaint, when he was met by a messenger, and told that he was betrayed. He went on, and met Toussaint, who showed him two letters—one from the French general, offering him any rank if he would put Maitland in his power, and the other his reply. It was, "Sir, I have promised the Englishman that he shall go back." [Cheers.] Let it stand, therefore, that the Negro, truthful as a knight of old, was cheated by his lying foe. Which race has reason to be proud of such a record?

But he was not cheated. He was under espionage. Suppose he

had refused: the government would have doubted him, would have found some cause to arrest him. He probably reasoned thus: "If I go willingly, I shall be treated accordingly"; and he went. The moment he entered the room, the officers drew their swords, and told him he was prisoner; and one young lieutenant who was present says, "He was not at all surprised, but seemed very sad." They put him on shipboard, and weighed anchor for France. As the island faded from his sight, he turned to the captain, and said, "You think you have rooted up the tree of liberty, but I am only a branch; I have planted the tree so deep that all France can never root it up." [Cheers.] Arrived in Paris, he was flung into jail, and Napoleon sent his secretary, Caffarelli, to him, supposing he had buried large treasures. He listened a while, then replied, "Young man, it is true I have lost treasures, but they are not such as you come to seek." He was then sent to the Castle of St. Joux, to a dungeon twelve feet by twenty, built wholly of stone, with a narrow window, high up on the side, looking out on the snows of Switzerland. In winter, ice covers the floor; in summer, it is damp and wet. In this living tomb the child of the sunny tropic was left to die. From this dungeon he wrote two letters to Napoleon. One of them ran thus:

> Sire, I am a French citizen. I never broke a law. By the grace of God, I have saved for you the best island of your realm. Sire, of your mercy grant me justice.

Napoleon never answered the letters. The commandant allowed him five francs a day for food and fuel. Napoleon heard of it, and reduced the sum to three. The luxurious usurper, who complained that the English government was stingy because it allowed him only six thousand dollars a month, stooped from his throne to cut down a dollar to a half, and still Toussaint did not die quick enough.

This dungeon was a tomb. The story is told that, in Josephine's time, a young French marquis was placed there, and the girl to whom he was betrothed went to the Empress and prayed for his release. Said Josephine to her, "Have a model of it made, and bring it to me." Josephine placed it near Napoleon. He said, "Take it away—it is horrible!" She put it on his footstool, and

he kicked it from him. She held it to him the third time, and said, "Sire, in this horrible dungeon you have put a man to die." "Take him out," said Napoleon, and the girl saved her lover. In this tomb Toussaint was buried, but he did not die fast enough. Finally, the commandant was told to go into Switzerland, to carry the keys of the dungeon with him, and to stay four days; when he returned, Toussaint was found starved to death. That imperial assassin was taken twelve years after to his prison at St. Helena, planned for a tomb, as he had planned that of Toussaint, and there he whined away his dying hours in pitiful complaints of curtains and titles, of dishes and rides. God grant that when some future Plutarch shall weigh the great men of our epoch, the whites against the blacks, he do not put that whining child at St. Helena into one scale, and into the other the Negro meeting death like a Roman, without a murmur, in the solitude of his icy dungeon!

From the moment he was betrayed, the Negroes began to doubt the French, and rushed to arms. Soon every Negro but Maurepas deserted the French. Leclerc summoned Maurepas to his side. He came, loyally bringing with him five hundred soldiers. Leclerc spiked his epaulettes to his shoulders, shot him, and flung him into the sea. He took his five hundred soldiers on shore, shot them on the edge of a pit, and tumbled them in. Dessalines from the mountain saw it, and, selecting five hundred French officers from his prisons, hung them on separate trees in sight of Leclerc's camp; and born, as I was, not far from Bunker Hill, I have yet found no reason to think he did wrong. [Cheers.] They murdered Pierre Toussaint's wife at his own door, and after such treatment that it was mercy when they killed her. The maddened husband, who had but a year before saved the lives of twelve hundred white men, carried his next thousand prisoners and sacrificed them on her grave.

The French exhausted every form of torture. The Negroes were bound together and thrown into the sea; anyone who floated was shot, others sunk with cannon balls tied to their feet; some smothered with sulphur fumes, others strangled, scourged to death, gibbeted; sixteen of Toussaint's officers were chained to rocks in desert islands, others in marshes, and left to be de-

voured by poisonous reptiles and insects. Rochambeau sent to Cuba for bloodhounds. When they arrived, the young girls went down to the wharf, decked the hounds with ribbons and flowers, kissed their necks, and, seated in the amphitheater, the women clapped their hands to see a Negro thrown to these dogs, previously starved to rage. But the Negroes besieged this very city so closely that these same girls, in their misery, ate the very hounds they had welcomed.

Then flashed forth that defying courage and sublime endurance which show how alike all races are when tried in the same furnace. The Roman wife, whose husband faltered when Nero ordered him to kill himself, seized the dagger and, mortally wounding her own body, cried, "Poetus, it is not hard to die." The world records it with proud tears. Just in the same spirit, when a Negro colonel was ordered to execution and trembled, his wife seized his sword and, giving herself a death wound, said, "Husband, death is sweet when liberty is gone."

The war went on. Napoleon sent over thirty thousand more soldiers. But disaster still followed his efforts. What the sword did not devour, the fever ate up. Leclerc died. Pauline carried his body back to France. Napoleon met her at Bordeaux, saying, "Sister, I gave you an army—you bring me back ashes." Rochambeau—the Rochambeau of our history—left in command of eight thousand troops, sent word to Dessalines: "When I take you, I will not shoot you like a soldier, or hang you like a white man; I will whip you to death like a slave." Dessalines chased him from battlefield to battlefield, from fort to fort, and finally shut him up in Samana. Heating cannon balls to destroy his fleet, Dessalines learned that Rochambeau had begged of the British admiral to cover his troops with the English flag, and the generous Negro suffered the boaster to embark undisturbed.

Some doubt the courage of the Negro. Go to Haiti, and stand on those fifty thousand graves of the best soldiers France ever had, and ask them what they think of the Negro's sword. And if that does not satisfy you, go to France, to the splendid mausoleum of the Counts of Rochambeau, and to the eight thousand graves of Frenchmen who skulked home under the English flag, and ask them. And if that does not satisfy you, come home, and

if it had been October 1859, you might have come by way of quaking Virginia, and asked her what she thought of Negro courage.

You may also remember this—that we Saxons were slaves about four hundred years, sold with the land, and our fathers never raised a finger to end that slavery. They waited till Christianity and civilization, till commerce and the discovery of America, melted away their chains. Spartacus in Italy led the slaves of Rome against the empress of the world. She murdered him, and crucified them. There never was a slave rebellion successful but once, and that was in St. Domingo. Every race has been, some time or other, in chains. But there never was a race that, weakened and degraded by such chattel slavery, unaided, tore off its own fetters, forged them into swords, and won its liberty on the battlefield, but one, and that was the black race of St. Domingo. God grant that the wise vigor of our government may avert that necessity from our land, may raise into peaceful liberty the four million committed to our care, and show under democratic institutions a statesmanship as farsighted as that of England, as brave as the Negro of Haiti!

So much for the courage of the Negro. Now look at his endurance. In 1805 he said to the white men, "This island is ours; not a white foot shall touch it." Side by side with him stood the South American republics, planted by the best blood of the countrymen of Lope de Vega and Cervantes. They topple over so often that you could no more daguerreotype their crumbling fragments than you could the waves of the ocean. And yet, at their side, the Negro has kept his island sacredly to himself. It is said that at first, with rare patriotism, the Haitian government ordered the destruction of all the sugar plantations remaining, and discouraged its culture, deeming that the temptation which lured the French back again to attempt their enslavement. Burn over New York tonight, fill up her canals, sink every ship, destroy her railroads, blot out every remnant of education from her sons, let her be ignorant and penniless, with nothing but her hands to begin the world again—how much could she do in sixty years? And Europe, too, would lend you money, but she will not lend

Haiti a dollar. Haiti, from the ruins of her colonial dependence, is become a civilized state, the seventh nation in the catalogue of commerce with this country, inferior in morals and education to none of the West Indian isles. Foreign merchants trust her courts as willingly as they do our own. Thus far, she has foiled the ambition of Spain, the greed of England, and the malicious statesmanship of Calhoun. Toussaint made her what she is. In this work there was grouped around him a score of men, mostly of pure Negro blood, who ably seconded his efforts. They were able in war and skillful in civil affairs, but not, like him, remarkable for that rare mingling of high qualities which alone makes true greatness, and insures a man leadership among those otherwise almost his equals. Toussaint was indisputably their chief. Courage, purpose, endurance—these are the tests. He did plant a state so deep that all the world has not been able to root it up.

I would call him Napoleon, but Napoleon made his way to empire over broken oaths and through a sea of blood. This man never broke his word. "No Retaliation" was his great motto and the rule of his life; and the last words uttered to his son in France were these: "My boy, you will one day go back to St. Domingo; forget that France murdered your father." I would call him Cromwell, but Cromwell was only a soldier, and the state he founded went down with him into his grave. I would call him Washington, but the great Virginian held slaves. This man risked his empire rather than permit the slave trade in the humblest village of his dominions.

You think me a fanatic tonight, for you read history, not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek, and Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England, Fayette for France, choose Washington as the bright, consummate flower of our earlier civilization, and John Brown the ripe fruit of our noonday [thunders of applause], then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in the clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, Toussaint L'Ouverture. [Long-continued applause.]

Abraham Lincoln Assassinated

The pace of emancipation did not suit Phillips. He was angered by the President's caution in carrying out freedom policies. The Emancipation Proclamation satisfied him very little, Lincoln's dream of ridding the country of Negroes entirely even less. But now the Thirteenth Amendment had truly ended slavery, and Lincoln himself was a martyr to Southern vengefulness. Phillips had never hesitated to express his differences with friend or foe, and he had never been too proud to express a change of views. He now saw Lincoln in a longer perspective. And though he was thought, as always, excessive in his language, Phillips in fact spoke with a judiciousness which few could claim in those hectic days, when he spoke at Tremont Temple, Boston, on April 23, 1865.

THESE are sober days. The judgments of God have found us out. Years gone by chastised us with whips; these chastise us with scorpions. Thirty years ago how strong our mountain stood, laughing prosperity on all its sides! None heeded the fire and gloom which slumbered below. It was nothing that a giant sin gagged our pulpits; that its mobs ruled our streets, burned men at the stake for their opinions, and hunted them like wild beasts for their humanity. It was nothing that, in the lonely quiet of the plantation, there fell on the unpitied person of the slave every torture which hellish ingenuity could devise. It was nothing that, as husband and father, mother and child, the Negro drained to its dregs all the bitterness that could be pressed into his cup; that, torn with whip and dogs, starved, hunted, tortured, racked, he cried, "How long, O Lord, how long!" In vain did a thousand witnesses crowd our highways, telling to the world the horrors of this prison house, none stopped to consider, none believed. Trade turned away its deaf ear; the Church gazed on them with stony brow; letters passed by with mocking

tongue. But what the world would not look at God has set today in a light so ghastly bright that it almost dazzles us blind. What the world refused to believe, God has written all over the face of the continent with the sword's point in the blood of our best and most beloved. We believe the agony of the slave's hovel, the mother, and the husband, when it takes its seat at our board. We realize the barbarism that crushed him in the sickening and brutal use of the relics of Bull Run, in the torture and starvation of Libby Prison, where idiocy was mercy, and death was God's best blessing; and now, still more bitterly, we realize it in the coward spite which strikes an unarmed man, unwarned, behind his back, in the assassin fingers which dabble with bloody knife at the throats of old men on sick pillows. O God, let this lesson be enough! Spare us any more such costly teaching!

This deed is but the result and fair representative of the system in whose defense it was done. No matter whether it was previously approved at Richmond, or whether the assassin, if he reaches the Confederates, be received with all honor, as the wretch Brooks was, and as this bloodier wretch will surely be wherever rebels are not dumb with fear of our cannon. No matter for all this. God shows this terrible act to teach the nation in unmistakable terms the terrible foe with which it has to deal. But for this fiendish spirit, North and South, which holds up the Rebellion, the assassin had never either wished or dared such a deed. This lurid flash only shows us how black and wide the cloud from which it sprung.

And what of him in whose precious blood this momentous lesson is writ? He sleeps in the blessings of the poor, whose fetters God commissioned him to break. Give prayers and tears to the desolate widow and the fatherless; but count him blessed far above the crowd of his fellow men. [Fervent cries of "Amen!"] He was permitted himself to deal the last staggering blow which sent rebellion reeling to its grave; and then, holding his darling boy by the hand, to walk the streets of its surrendered capital, while his ears drank in praise and thanksgiving which bore his name to the throne of God in every form piety and gratitude could invent; and finally, to seal the sure triumph of the cause he loved with his own blood. He caught the first notes of the

coming jubilee, and heard his own name in every one. Who among living men may not envy him? Suppose that when a boy, as he floated on the slow current of the Mississippi, idly gazing at the slave upon its banks, some angel had lifted the curtain and shown him that in the prime of his manhood he should see this proud empire rocked to its foundations in the effort to break those chains; should himself marshall the hosts of the Almighty in the grandest and holiest war that Christendom ever knew, and deal with half-reluctant hand that thunderbolt of justice which would smite the foul system to the dust, then die, leaving a name immortal in the sturdy pride of our race and the undying gratitude of another—would any credulity, however sanguine, any enthusiasm however fervid, have enabled him to believe it? Fortunate man! He has lived to do it! [Applause.] God has graciously withheld him from any fatal misstep in the great advance, and withdrawn him at the moment when his star touched its zenith, and the nation needed a sterner hand for the work God gives it to do.

No matter now that, unable to lead and form the nation, he was contented to be only its representative and mouthpiece; no matter that, with prejudices hanging about him, he groped his way very slowly and sometimes reluctantly forward: let us remember how patient he was of contradiction, how little obstinate in opinion, how willing, like Lord Bacon, "to light his torch at every man's candle." With the least possible personal hatred; with too little sectional bitterness, often forgetting justice in mercy; tenderhearted to any misery his own eyes saw; and in any deed which needed his actual sanction, if his sympathy had limits —recollect he was human, and that he welcomed light more than most men, was more honest than his fellows, and with a truth to his own convictions such as few politicians achieve. With all his shortcomings, we point proudly to him as the natural growth of democratic institutions. [Applause.] Coming time will put him in that galaxy of Americans which makes our history the daystar of the nations—Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Jefferson, and Jay. History will add his name to the bright list, with a more loving claim on our gratitude than either of them. No one of those was called to die for his cause. For him, when

the nation needed to be raised to its last dread duty, we were prepared for it by the baptism of his blood.

What shall we say as to the punishment of rebels? The air is thick with threats of vengeance. I admire the motive which prompts these; but let us remember no cause, however infamous, was ever crushed by punishing its advocates and abettors—all history proves this. There is no class of men base and coward enough, no matter what their views and purpose, to make the policy of vengeance successful. In bad causes, as well as good, it is still true that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." We cannot prevail against this principle of human nature. And again, with regard to the dozen chief rebels, it will never be a practical question whether we shall hang them. Those not now in Europe will soon be there; indeed, after paroling the bloodiest and guiltiest of all, Robert E. Lee, there would be little fitness in hanging any lesser wretch.

The only punishment which ever crushes a cause is that which its leader necessarily suffers in consequence of the new order of things made necessary to prevent the recurrence of their sin. It was not the blood of two peers and thirty commoners which England shed after the rebellion of 1715, or that of five peers and twenty commoners after the rising of 1745, which crushed the House of Stuart. Though the fight had lasted only a few months, those blocks and gibbets gave Charles his only chance to recover. But the confiscated lands of his adherents and the new political arrangement of the Highlands—just, and recognized as such, because necessary—these quenched his star forever.

Our Rebellion has lasted four years. Government has exchanged prisoners, and acknowledged its belligerent rights. After that gibbets are out of the question. A thousand men rule the Rebellion, are the Rebellion. A thousand men! We cannot hang them all; we cannot hang men in regiments. What, cover the continent with gibbets! We cannot sicken the nineteenth century with such a sight. It would sink our civilization to the level of Southern barbarism. It would forfeit our very right to supersede the Southern system, which right is based on ours being better than theirs. To make its cornerstone the gibbet would degrade us to the level of Davis and Lee. The structure of government

which bore the earthquake shock of 1861 with hardly a jar, and which now bears the assassination of its chief magistrate in this crisis of civil war with even less disturbance, needs for its safety no such policy of vengeance; its serene strength needs to use only so much severity as will fully guarantee security for the future.

Banish every one of these thousand rebel leaders—every one of them—on pain of death if they ever return! [Loud applause.] Confiscate every dollar and acre they own. [Applause.] These steps the world and their followers will see are necessary to kill the seeds of *caste,* dangerous State rights, and secession. [Applause.] Banish Lee with the rest. [Applause.] No government should ask of the South, which he has wasted, and the North, which he has murdered, such superabundant Christian patience as to tolerate in our streets the presence of a wretch whose hand upheld Libby Prison and Andersonville, and whose soul is black with sixty-four thousand deaths of prisoners by starvation and torture.

What of our new President? His whole life is a pledge that he knows and hates thoroughly that *caste* which is the Gibraltar of secession. *Caste,* mailed in State rights, seized slavery as its weapon to smite down the Union. Said Jackson, in 1833, "Slavery will be the next pretext for rebellion." Pretext! That pretext and weapon we wrench from the rebel hands the moment we pass the antislavery amendment to the Constitution. Now kill *caste,* the foe who wields it. Andy Johnson is our natural leader for this. His life has been pledged to it. He put on his spurs with this vow of knighthood. He sees that confiscation, land placed in the hands of the *masses,* is the means to kill this foe.

Land and the ballot are the true foundations of all governments. Intrust them, wherever loyalty exists, to all those, black and white, who have upheld the flag. [Applause.] Reconstruct no State without giving to every loyal man in it the ballot. I scout all limitations of knowledge, property, or race. [Applause.] Universal suffrage for me; that was the Revolutionary model. Every freeman voted, black or white, whether he could read or not. My rule is, any citizen liable to be hanged for crime is entitled to vote for rulers. The ballot insures the school.

Mr. Johnson has not yet uttered a word which shows that he

sees the need of Negro suffrage to guarantee the Union. The best thing he has said on this point, showing a mind open to light, is thus reported by one of the most intelligent men in the country, the Baltimore correspondent of the Boston *Commonwealth:*

> The Vice-President was holding forth very eloquently in front of Admiral Lee's dwelling, just in front of the War Office in Washington. He said he was willing to send every Negro in the country to Africa to save the Union; nay, he was willing to cut Africa loose from Asia, and sink the whole black race ten thousand fathoms deep to effect this object. A loud voice sang out in the crowd, "Let the Negro stay where he is, Governor, and give him the ballot, and the Union will be safe forever!" "And I am ready to do that too!" [loud applause] shouted the governor, with intense energy, whereat he got three times three for the noble sentiment. I witnessed this scene, and was pleased to hear our Vice-President take this high ground; for up to this point must the nation quickly advance, or there will be no peace, no rest, no prosperity, no blessing, for our suffering and distracted country.

The need of giving the Negro a ballot is what we must press on the President's attention. Beware the mistake which fastened McClellan on us, running too fast to endorse a man while untried, determined to manufacture a hero and leader at any rate. The President tells us that he waits to announce his policy till events call for it—a wise, timely, and statesmanlike course. Let us imitate it. Assure him in return that the government shall have our support like good citizens. But remind him that we will tell him what we think of his policy when we learn what it is. He says: "Wait. I shall punish; I shall confiscate. What more I shall do you will know when I do it."

Let us reply: "Good, so far good! Banish the rebels; see to it that, beyond all mistake you strip them of all possibility of doing harm. But see to it also that before you admit a single State to the Union, you oblige it to give every loyal man in it the ballot—the ballot, which secures education; the ballot, which begets character where it lodges responsibility; the ballot, having which no class need fear injustice or contempt; the ballot, which puts the helm of the Union into the hands of those who love and have upheld it. Land, where every man's title deed,

based on confiscation, is the bond which ties his interest to the Union; ballot, the weapon which enables him to defend his property and the Union—these are the motives for the white man. The Negro needs no motive but his instinct and heart. Give him the bullet and ballot; he needs them, and while he holds them the Union is safe. To reconstruct now without giving the Negro the ballot would be a greater blunder, and considering our better light, a greater sin, than our fathers committed in 1789; and we should have no right to expect from it any less disastrous results."

This is the lesson God teaches us in the blood of Lincoln. Like Egypt, we are made to read our lesson in the blood of our firstborn and the seats of our princes left empty. We bury all false magnanimity in this fresh grave, writing over it the maxim of the coming four years, "Treason is the greatest of crimes, and not a mere difference of opinion." That is the motto of our leader today; that the warning this atrocious crime sounds throughout the land. Let us heed it, and need no more such costly teaching. [Loud applause.]

Labor and the Eight-Hour Movement

William Lloyd Garrison shut down his press in 1865, since slavery was dead, but Phillips insisted that the Negroes were yet to be secured in their newly won liberties, and he took over the presidency of the American Anti-Slavery Society. As such, he continued active in the politics of Reconstruction, fighting for the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments which were to give civil rights and the suffrage to the freedmen. As early as November 2, 1865, however, and in the same Faneuil Hall with which so much of his beliefs was associated, he picked up a new cause. It was to turn many of his new-found admirers against him. Editors and politicians who accepted him as an antislavery immortal were revolted by his adherence to prolabor tenets. As the era of strikes, labor organization, and socialist programs emerged, it seemed to them the sheerest treachery of Phillips to lend outlaws and aliens the prestige of his great name. Some more charitable critics presumed to think him senile. But labor, at least, was proud of his endorsement, and gave circulation to his renewed eloquence.

It is twenty-nine years this month since I first stood on the platform of Faneuil Hall to address an audience of the citizens of Boston. I felt then that I was speaking for the cause of the laboring men, and if tonight I should make the last speech of my life, I would be glad that it should be in the same strain—for laboring men and their rights.

The labor of these twenty-nine years has been in behalf of a race bought and sold. The South did not rest their system wholly on this claim to own their laborers; but according to Chancellor Harper, Alexander H. Stevens, Governor Pickens, and John C. Calhoun, asserted that the laborer must necessarily be owned by capitalists or individuals. That struggle for the ownership of labor is now somewhat near its end; and we fitly commence a

struggle to define and to arrange the true relations of capital and labor. Today one of your sons is born. He lies in his cradle as the child of a man without means, with a little education, and with less leisure. The favored child of the capitalist is borne up by every circumstance, as on the eagle's wings. The problem of today is how to make the chances of the two as equal as possible; and before this movement stops, every child born in America must have an equal chance in life.

In this final arrangement, every man will combine in his own person the laborer and the capitalist. There cannot be any conflict between labor and capital. What makes our lives easier than those of our ancestors? They are so because six generations of workmen have made Massachusetts a great treasure house of capital. When our fathers landed here, Massachusetts was a wilderness. Forests have been removed, roads built, cities raised by capital or aggregated labor. Capital and labor are only the two arms of a pair of scissors—useless when separate, and only when fastened together cutting everything before them.

What, then, do we come here for? To find out the true relation between capital and labor, to make the laborer more comfortable, and a more worthy citizen. Where the government rests on the people, its administrators are bound to give time to the laborers to understand the theory of government. When shut up an excessive number of hours in labor, the workman comes out but the fag end of a man, without brain to think of such subjects. Now, therefore, it is a fair division to give him eight hours for labor, eight hours for sleep, and eight hours for his own—his own to use as he pleases. [Applause.] I shall not be the first to say, "You shall not have it unless you come under bonds to use it well." It is none of my business to say what he shall do with what is his own. I shall not say to the millionaire, "We will defend you in the possession of your stocks and bonds, if you will use them well." I may argue with him, and shall, to use his wealth properly; but my first object shall be to give it to him, because it belongs to him. It has been argued that the Negro would not work if his freedom was given to him. I have answered, his freedom belongs to him, and he is responsible for its use.

The present effort is to give the laborer more leisure, in order

to make him more intelligent. Never, in history, has more leisure been secured to the working classes but greater intelligence has resulted therefrom. Thirty millions of Frenchmen today hold a voice in the government, because the cry against lessening their labors was not heeded. The same cry has been raised here; it has been said that the workman will not work unless you starve him, that starvation is the only stimulus which the masses will obey. I don't believe it, and I want to lift them to the possibility of showing that it is not true.

Now, how shall this thing be done? I will tell you, I have had a little experience in this matter. [Laughter.] I have never held, and never expect to hold, a political office; but this I know, that the man who only looks at the game can sometimes criticize it better than the players. This country is one of ideas. You can never gain your point by threats; it would be disgraceful to gain it thus. Why have you not carried your ends before? Because in ignorance and division you have let the other side have their own way. We are ruled by brains. You might as well try to roll back Niagara, as to try to rule New England against her ideas. You have got to face them, and to change them. You need not despair if truth is on your side. You must have the truth, and must work for it. There are three sorts of men: those who have the truth, but lock it up; those who have it not, but work like the devil against it; and those who have it, and force it on the willing conscience of the nation. You want books and journals. I am glad you have one *Voice;* but one can't cover the State or the North. You want something to subjugate all journals, and bring cultivated minds and foremost men to your service. Opinions differ, not from scoundrelism or want of heart. You want to make the intellect of the country discuss the question, to make every man speak of it. How did we antislavery men do this? [A voice, "Kept at it!"] Yes, kept at it. You know the patient Job said, "Oh, that mine adversary had written a book!" Well, he was a wise man. [Laughter.] When I made a speech here, the *Daily Advertiser* abused me; but it could not abuse justice so much but that men could see the delusion. I defy a man to make an argument against the laws of God that will hold water. Any man trying to dodge justice will answer himself.

How will you make the newspapers and the public men discuss the Labor Question? I will tell you. Go into the political field, and by the voice of forty thousand workmen say, "We mean that eight hours shall be a day's work, and no man shall go into office who opposes it." What will be the result? It will be the same as in 1846, when the abolitionists said they were going to trample on the Whig and Democratic parties. The journals then took up the question; the intellect and education of the country took hold of it, and settled it by balking the South so that they said, "Make or ruin, we will go outside." How will you make your enemies wield the pen? Do it by announcing your political creed. Break into the debating society at the statehouse, and make them discuss the Labor Question. I don't want the subject made political in a bad sense of the word, but in a higher sense. When men have wrongs to complain of, they should go to the ballot box and right them. I may be asked if I would give universal suffrage to ignorant men, and thus give them power over the property of the millionaire. I answer, Yes; all the more for that, because then the millionaire would be willing to give a part of his wealth to aid in making voters intelligent. Universal suffrage is taking a bond of the rich to educate the poor. You will never reach the influential classes by meetings like these. How will you do it? Go to your next candidate for mayor, and ask him if he is in favor of the eight-hour system. If he says, Yes, let it be known that he is to have your votes. If No, let him know that he will not have them. You will not, perhaps, gain the victory the first time. It would be a disgrace if you did. [A voice, "Why?"] Because it would look as if you had frightened the city of Boston. You will gain your point by argument. The *Journal,* the *Advertiser,* the *Transcript* will discuss it, and the State will be lifted by the four corners. You will gain in twelve months what we gained in twelve years, if you are true to yourselves.

Some may think this a political address. I belong to no political party, and if I live to the age of Methuselah, do not expect a vote. I want Charles Sumner to stand on this platform, and give his views on this question; I want Samuel Hooper to come down here and look his constituents in the face; I want Henry Wilson, with his tireless activity, to give his labors to the workingmen.

Abbott Lawrence, in 1840, when asked by a committee of his constituents what his opinion was in regard to slavery in the District of Columbia, said he didn't know as he had any opinion on the subject, and if he had, it was not worth while to express it. Twenty years later he would have cut off his hands rather than give such an answer. Two years hence, if you are true to yourselves, instead of having an Ishmaelite like me to address you, you can take your pick out of all the politicians in the country; instead of one journal, you will have all the journals discussing the Labor Question.

You must imitate the tenacity of the abolitionists in adhering to a single issue. The Temperance Party committed the folly of depending upon resolutions, and voting for Whigs and Democrats; and influential men, seeing that they did not value their own principles, left them out in the cold. There are men enough here to govern this city. When you have convinced thinking men that it is right, and humane men that it is just, you will gain your cause. Men always lose half of what is gained by violence. What is gained by argument is gained forever. Mass meetings like these amount to nothing. A political movement, saying, "We will have our rights," is a mass meeting in perpetual session. Filtered through the ballot box comes the will of the people, and statesmen bow to it. Go home, and say that the workingmen of Massachusetts are a unit, and that they mean to stereotype their purpose on the statute book.

The Case for Labor

Six years of service to his new principles made Phillips a veteran of labor. In Worcester, on September 4, 1871, a Labor-Reform Convention met, with Phillips presiding. He drew up resolutions which showed him as open to new ideas as he had ever been. He proposed a war on the wage system, on "lavish grants of the public lands to speculating companies," on financial methods which made the rich richer and the poor poorer. He sought co-operative systems linking capital and labor, the eight-hour day, equal pay for women doing equal work, and an end of the importation of underpaid workers. Phillips's weapon for accomplishing these goals was the ballot. Then would the people "peaceably . . . take possession of their own," he went on to say in explanation of this platform. "No more riots in the streets; no more disorder and revolution; no more arming of different bands; no cannon loaded to the lips." But his critics remembered the Paris Commune of that same year and wrote Phillips down as an abettor of terrorists. In Boston, October 31, 1871, Phillips explained himself at greater length and in his accustomed style.

Ladies and Gentlemen: We are sometimes so near an object that we cannot see it. I could place you so near the City Hall tonight that you would not know whether you were looking at a ton of granite or a wall of a large building. So it is with a fact. The men who stand the nearest to it are often the last to recognize either its breadth or its meaning. Perhaps the last men to appreciate a fact are the men nearest to whose eyes it passes; and it is just so in government. We are hardly aware of the changes that are taking place about us; our children will understand them distinctly.

There is a large class among our German fellow citizens who advocate the abolition of the Presidency. The thoughtful in that class perceive, what the ordinary passer-by does not recognize,

that we are daily abolishing the Presidency, and the movement of the country for fifty years has been toward the abolition of the Presidency. You see this tendency in a variety of circumstances. When we were first a nation, the greatest men among us were chosen President, and named for President; but now we don't think of putting up a first-rate man.

There is another feature we don't see—that the government is fast being monopolized by the House of Representatives. If we go on as we have done for half a century, there will be no government in this country except the House. Whatever defies the power of the great House will go down. Whether harmonious and beneficent results will follow our adoption of the system depends upon whether the great mass of men and women, with universal suffrage as their sheet anchor, can work out through these results one single tool like the House.

I have only gone into this statement to approach a second point; and that is, we stand on the moment when the people actually put their hands forth for power. We stand at an epoch when the nature of the government is undergoing a fundamental change. I have been speaking of machines—whether we should operate through a Senate and President, or solely through a House. I have been speaking of the spindles and wheels. Below that lies the water power. The water power of Great Britain has been the wealth of thirty thousand landholders—thirty thousand landholding families, perhaps seven hundred thousand or a million voters. With us, the water power is to be the ballots of ten millions of adult men and women, scattered through all classes—rich and poor, educated and ignorant, prompt and conservative, radical and timid, all modes and kinds and qualities of mind. Well, that brings me to the form which this great advance of the people takes. It is the working masses that are really about to put their hands to the work of governing.

It is no accident, no caprice of an individual, no mere shout of the political arena, that heralds today the great labor movement of the United States.

But in the meantime, over the horizon, looming at first and now almost touching its meridian, comes up another power—I mean the power of wealth, the inordinate power of capital. Our

fathers, when they prevented entail, when they provided for the distribution of estates, thought they had erected a bulwark against the money power that had killed Great Britain. They forgot that money could combine; that a moneyed corporation was like the papacy—a succession of persons with a unity of purpose; that it never died; that it never by natural proclivity became imbecile. The grandson of a king is necessarily one third an idiot; but the third generation of a money corporation is wiser for the experience of predecessors, and preserves the same unity of purpose.

This great money power looms over the horizon at the very moment when, to every thoughtful man, the power of the masses concentrating in the House of Representatives is to become the sole omnipotence of the State. Naturally so ominous a conjecture provokes resistance; naturally a peril so immediate prompts the wealthy class of the community to combine for defense.

The land of England has ruled it for six hundred years. The corporations of America mean to rule it in the same way, and unless some power more radical than that of ordinary politics is found, will rule it inevitably. I confess that the only fear I have in regard to republican institutions is whether, in our day, any adequate remedy will be found for this incoming flood of the power of incorporated wealth. No statesman, no public man yet, has dared to defy it. Every man that has met it has been crushed to powder; and the only hope of any effectual grapple with it is in rousing the actual masses, whose interests permanently lie in an opposite direction, to grapple with this great force; for you know very well that our great cities are the radiating points from which go forth the great journalism, the culture, the education, the commercial influences that make and shape the nation. The great cities are the arsenals of great wealth, where wealth manages everything its own way.

Now, gentlemen, to me the labor movement means just this: It is the last noble protest of the American people against the power of incorporated wealth, seeking to do over again what the Whig aristocracy of Great Britain has successfully done for two hundred years. Thirty thousand families own Great Britain today; and if you multiply John Bright by a hundred; and double his eloquence, it seems impossible that he should save England

from a violent convulsion in the great grapple between such a power and the people who have determined to have their way.

Men blame us, the representatives of the workingmen of the nation, that we come into politics. The other day it was my good fortune to meet that distinguished Frenchman, Monsieur Coquerel; and he asked me what was the motto of the workingmen of the United States. I said to him, "Short hours, better education, co-operation in the end, and in the meantime a political movement that will concentrate the thought of the country upon this thing."

Now, here I take issue with the best critic which the labor movement has met: I refer to Reverend Samuel Johnson of Salem, one of the thinkers who has spread out before the people his objections to the labor movement of this country. His first objection is that we will hurry into politics. Well, now, our answer to him, and to the score of other scholars who have been criticizing us, is this: Gentlemen, we see the benefit of going into politics. If we had not rushed into politics, had not taken Massachusetts by the four corners and shaken her, you never would have written your criticisms. We rush into politics because politics is the safety valve. We could discuss as well as you, if you would only give us bread and houses, fair pay and leisure, and opportunities to travel. We could sit and discuss the question for the next fifty years. It's a very easy thing to discuss, for a gentleman in his study, with no anxiety about tomorrow. Why, the ladies and gentlemen of the reign of Louis XV and Louis XVI, in France, seated in gilded saloons and on Persian carpets, surrounded with luxury, with the products of India, and the curious manufactures of ingenious Lyon and Rheims, discussed the rights of man, and balanced them in dainty phrases, and expressed them in such quaint generalizations that Jefferson borrowed the Declaration of Independence from their hands. There they sat, balancing and discussing sweetly, making out new theories, and daily erecting a splendid architecture of debate, till the angry crowd broke open the doors, and ended the discussion in blood. They waited too long, discussed about half a century too long. You see, discussion is very good when a man has bread to eat, and his children all portioned off, and his daughters mar-

ried, and his house furnished and paid for, and his will made; but discussion is very bad when

> Ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers!
> Ere the sorrow comes with years;*

—discussion is bad when a class bends under actual oppression. We want immediate action.

We would fain save this issue from an outbreak of actual violence. Therefore we go into politics.

Well, then, our critic goes on to say, "What do you call yourselves Labor Party for? All men labor. Rufus Choate labors. Daniel Webster labors. Why do you confine your party to the men that work?" Well, now, we confine it because thus there is no mistake. Now, suppose you should take up a book presenting the condition of the laboring classes of Great Britain. Mr. Gladstone works harder than any other man there; Lord Brougham did more work than any other man there; Lord Palmerston, up to his eightieth year, worked hard as any man there. But if you were to take up a book on the workingmen of Great Britain, do you think you would find the condition of Lord Brougham there? If you took up a book on the British laboring class, or how much they eat, what kind of houses they live in, etc., do you think you would find Gladstone's income, and the number of rooms he had in his house, and how many children he had had the last fifty years? So if an Englishman came here, and said, "I want to know something about your workingmen. Please let me hear it from some of themselves. Whom shall I go to?" Would you send him to Daniel Webster or Rufus Choate? But Daniel Webster did as much work as any man of his day. Would you have him sent to Rufus Choate? But Rufus Choate was a hard-working man. John Marshall and Lemuel Shaw did as much work as any men in Massachusetts or Virginia; but if George Combe had come to this country, and said, "I want to see a specimen of the laboring class of the United States," I doubt whether any man would have sent him to Lemuel Shaw. I ask the critics of the labor movement, whether any man ever mis-

* From "The Cry of the Children," by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose verse Phillips much admired. [Ed.]

understood this? Every man who reads of the labor question knows that it means the movement of the men that earn their living with their hands; that are employed and paid in wages; are gathered under roofs of factories; sent out on farms; sent out on ships; gathered on the walls. In popular acceptation, the working class means the men that work with their hands, for wages, so many hours a day, employed by great capitalists; that work for everybody else.

Why do we move for this class? "Why," says Mr. Johnson, "don't you move for all workingmen?" Because, while Daniel Webster gets forty thousand dollars for arguing the Mexican claims, there is no need of anybody's moving for him. While Rufus Choate gets five thousand dollars for making one argument to a jury, there is no need of moving for him, or for the men that work with their brains—that do highly disciplined and skilled labor, invent, and write books. The reason why the labor movement confines itself to a single class is because that class of work does not get paid, does not get protection. Mental labor is adequately paid, and more than adequately protected. It can shift its channels; it can vary according to the supply and demand. If a man fails as a minister, why, he becomes a railway conductor. If that doesn't suit him, he turns out, and becomes the agent of an insurance office. If that doesn't suit, he goes West, and becomes governor of a Territory. And if he finds himself incapable of either of these positions, he comes home, and gets to be a city editor. He varies his occupation as he pleases, and doesn't need protection. But the great mass, chained to a trade, doomed to be ground up in the mill of supply and demand, that work so many hours a day, and must run in the great ruts of business—they are the men whose inadequate protection, whose unfair share of the general product claims a movement in their behalf.

Well, the third charge brought by Mr. Johnson against us is that we are cruel—we combine; we prevent this man from laboring there, and we won't let that man learn our trade; we form trade unions. To be sure we do. We say to the Chinese, "Stay at home. Don't come here by importation; come by immigration." We say to the crowding millions who try to swamp our trade,

"Stand aloof; we won't teach you." We say to the mills of Lowell, who have turned us out-of-doors, "We'll starve you into submission." Well, "it's a narrow contest. It's an unjust, it's a cruel, it's an avaricious method." So it is. Where did we learn it? Learned it of capital, learned it of our enemies.

I know labor is narrow; I know she is aggressive; I know she arms herself with the best weapon that a corrupt civilization furnishes—all true. Where do we get these ideas? Borrowed them from capital, every one of them; and when you advance to us on the level of peace, unarmed, we'll meet you on the same. While you combine and plot and defend, so will we.

But Mr. Johnson says, "Come into the world with the white banner of peace." Ay, we will, when you disarm. How foolish it would have been for Grant to send home his Sharps rifles to Springfield, and garner all his cannon in New York, and put all his monitors in the harbor of Norfolk, and go down to Virginia with eighty thousand unarmed men, to look her in the face! Labor comes up and says, "They have shotted their cannon to the lips; they have rough-ground their swords as in battle; they have adopted every new method; they have invented every dangerous machine—and it is all planted like a great park of artillery against us. They have incorporated wealth; they have hidden behind banks; they have concealed themselves in currency; they have sheltered themselves in taxation; they have passed rules to govern us—and we will improve upon the lesson they have taught us. When they disarm, we will—not before."

Well, then, the fourth charge is found in the *Daily Advertiser.* We had a meeting at Framingham, and passed a set of resolutions; we adopted a platform; and the next day the *Daily Advertiser* granted us the condescension of an article, criticizing our action, especially mine; and they described what we had adopted. They painted its horrible tendency. They said, "If you adopt that principle, it will lead you to that (and so on to that) till the final result will be—" I held my breath. I said to myself, "What will it probably be? Perhaps the stereotyped ghost of the French Revolution; that's what's coming." "The final result will be—" Horrible! I thought probably they would paint a millionaire hanging on every lamppost. "The final result—" Perhaps it will be

Mormonism; society dissolved into its original elements. Horrible! I began to feel a faint sensation; but I concluded to read on: "The final result will be an equalization of property." Horrible, horrible! Actually, men will be almost equal! An equalization of property! Any man that does that ought to be hanged. Well, we do mean it; we do mean just that. That's the meaning of the labor movement—an equalization of property. The *Advertiser* has found us out, actually discovered our plot. He's let the cat out of the bag. We didn't mean to have told you, but it is so. What we need is an equalization of property—nothing else. My ideal of a civilization is a very high one; but the approach to it is a New England town of some two thousand inhabitants, with no rich man and no poor man in it, all mingling in the same society, every child at the same school, no poorhouse, no beggar, opportunities equal, nobody too proud to stand aloof, nobody too humble to be shut out. That's New England as it was fifty years ago, the horrible creature that the *Daily Advertiser* fears. That's what Framingham proposes to bring about. But why isn't Framingham contented? Because the civilization that lingers beautifully on the hillsides of New England, nestles sweetly in the valleys of Vermont, the moment it approaches a crowd like Boston, or a million of men gathered in one place like New York —rots. It cannot force the crowd; it cannot stand the great centers of modern civilization.

Our civilization cannot stand the city. One reason is it has got some hidden disease. Another reason is the moment it flows out into the broad, deep activity of the nineteenth century, it betrays its weakness, and copies Europe. The moment this sweet-scented, dew-smelling Vermont flows down into the slums of New York, it becomes like London. The moment the North gathers its forces, and goes down the Mississippi Valley into New Orleans, social science stands aghast. Modern civilization shrinks back at the terrible evil which she can neither fathom nor cure, just as she does in Europe.

What is our cause? It is this: there are three hundred and fifty millions of human beings in what you call Christendom, and two hundred millions of them don't have enough to eat from January to December. I won't ask for culture, for opportunities

for education, for travel, for society; but two hundred millions of men gathered under Christendom don't have even enough to eat. A hundred thousand men in the city of New York live in dwellings that a rich man wouldn't let his horse stay in a day.

But that isn't anything. You should go up to beautiful Berkshire with me, into the factories there. It shall be the day after a Presidential election. I will go with you into a counting room —four hundred employees. The partners are sitting down, the day after a Presidential election. They take the list of workmen, and sift them out; and every man that has not voted the ticket they wanted is thrown out to starve just as if he were cattle. That's Christian civilization! that's Massachusetts! I don't like that significant fact. I leap from that town into a large mill, with five hundred employees, and say to the master, "How about the dwellings of your operatives? How many hours do they have at home?" "Well, I hope they don't have any. The best-ventilated place they are ever in is my mill. They had better stay here sixteen hours out of the twenty-four; it keeps them out of mischief better than any other place. As long as they work, they are not doing worse. I cannot attend to their houses." I say to him, "It seems to me you do the same for your ox." That's another significant fact of our civilization. I go to Lowell, and I say to a young girl, wandering in the streets, "How is this?" "Well, I worked here seven years, and I thought I would leave that mill and go to another; and the corporation won't give me my ticket. I have sued them in the Supreme Court, and I cannot get it; and here I am, penniless, in eastern Massachusetts." That's Christian civilization. I am picking up, not individual facts, but significant rules, that were made for labor.

You say, "What does labor need in New England?" It needs justice. Mr. Stewart,* in New York, has bought a whole town; and he is going to build model houses, and house there all the labor he can get to go into them. Yet the civilization which alone can look the New Testament in the face is a civilization where one man does not depend on the pity of another man's building him a model lodging house; the civilization which alone can

* A. T. Stewart, whose department store was the Macy's of its time. He owned other major New York properties. [Ed.]

look the New Testament in the face is a civilization where one man could not build, and another man would not need, that sort of refuge.

No, gentlemen, what we mean is this: the labor of yesterday, your capital, is protected sacredly. Not so the labor of today. The labor of yesterday gets twice the protection and twice the pay that the labor of today gets. Capital gets twice the protection and twice the pay.

Now, we mean a radical change, and in the few minutes that are left me, I want to indicate our object.

We mean certain great radical changes. I am not quite of the opinion of Mr. Secretary Boutwell, when he said here the other night, that fifty years hence the idea that a man could own land, and leave it to his children, would be ridiculous. I have not quite come to that. But then, you know there is a reason for it; he is a radical, and I have always been a conservative. There is a curious thing underlies lands. We are not quite certain that we have got the best system. Secretary Boutwell may be right. Seventy years ago a man offered to a relative of mine all the land between Federal Street and Hawley Street, between Milk Street and Franklin, for thirty-three hundred dollars. He came to him day after day, urging him to purchase; and the answer was, "I am not rich enough to have a cow pasture at that price, and I couldn't use it for anything else,"—that tract of land which today, gentlemen, as you know, would sell for three million dollars. Now, labor goes about, like Socrates, asking questions. We don't assume anything. When we were little boys, and did our sums on the slate, and the answer came out wrong, we didn't break the slate. We went to the master; and he said, "Go back; there's a mistake somewhere; if you examine, you will find it." I come into a civilization in which two men out of three don't have enough to eat. I come into New York, where it is a rich man that supplies a lodging for houseless poverty. I say to myself, "That course isn't right; there's a mistake somewhere." Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. The end of things is New York. That doesn't cohere. Where is the mistake? It is somewhere, and the labor movement is trying to find it out.

Again, gentlemen, we have another doubt to express. Are you

quite certain that capital—the child of artificial laws, the product of society, the mere growth of social life—has a right to only an equal burden with labor, the living spring? We doubt it so much that we think we have invented a way to defeat Tom Scott, of the Pennsylvania Central. We think we have devised a little plan—Abraham Lincoln used to have a little story—by which we will save the Congress of the nation from the moneyed corporations of the State. When we get into power, there is one thing we mean to do. If a man owns a single house, we will tax him one hundred dollars. If he owns ten houses of like value, we won't tax him one thousand dollars, but two thousand dollars. If he owns a hundred houses, we won't tax him ten thousand dollars, but sixty thousand dollars; and the richer a man grows, the bigger his tax, so that when he is worth forty million dollars he will not have more than twenty thousand dollars a year to live on. We'll double and treble and quintuple and sextuple and increase tenfold the taxes, till Stewart, out of his uncounted millions, and the Pennsylvania Central, out of its measureless income, shall not have anything more than a moderate lodging and an honest table. The corporations we would have are those of associated labor and capital—co-operation.

We'll crumble up wealth by making it unprofitable to be rich. The poor man shall have a larger income in proportion as he is poor. The rich man shall have a lesser income in proportion as he is rich. You will say, "Is that just?" My friends, it is safe. Man is more valuable than money. You say, "Then capital will go to Europe." Good heavens, let it go!

If other states wish to make themselves vassals to wealth, so will not we. We will save a country equal from end to end. Land, private property, all sorts of property, shall be so dearly taxed that it shall be impossible to be rich; for it is in wealth, in incorporated, combining, perpetuated wealth, that the danger of labor lies.

The Old South Meetinghouse

By June 4, 1876, when Wendell Phillips appeared at Old South Meetinghouse to speak on its significance as a public forum and as harboring the ghosts of Boston's great figures, he was one of the dwindling number of survivors of the antislavery crusade: already hallowed, already garlanded in victory. This was the stormy post-Civil War era of Jim Fisk, of President Ulysses S. Grant, of John D. Rockefeller, Thomas A. Edison, the great atheist Robert G. Ingersoll, Henry George, Booker T. Washington, and the turncoat from Negro-white accommodation Georgia's Tom Watson. Too many of these leaders of the new era honored antislavery with their lips, rather than with their hearts, but it seemed above human forgetfulness. Ahead was Wendell Phillips's final accolade: an invitation in 1881 from so-long alienated Harvard for him to deliver the centennial Phi Beta Kappa oration. The Transcendentalist James Freeman Clarke would be much impressed. He had heard Ralph Waldo Emerson's historic 1837 Phi Beta Kappa address, given when he had been "an unpopular and suspected man in the literary circles of Boston." The new invitation would seem a historic event to Clarke. Phillips would be less impressed. At Old South he spoke to the present and the future on the nature of human want and human capacity: "Marble, gold, and granite are not real; *the only actual reality is an idea."*

Ladies and Gentlemen: Why are we here today? Why should this relic, a hundred years old, stir your pulses today so keenly? We sometimes find a community or an individual with their hearts set on some old roof or great scene; and as we look on, it seems to us an exaggerated feeling, a fond conceit, an unfounded attachment, too emphatic value set on some ancient thing or spot which memory endears to them.

But we have a right today—this year we have a right beyond

all question, and with no possibility of exaggerating the importance of the hour—to ask the world itself to pause when this nation completes the first hundred years of its life; because these forty millions of people have at last achieved what no race, no nation, no age hitherto has succeeded in doing. We have founded a republic on the unlimited suffrage of the millions. We have actually worked out the problem that man, as God created him, may be trusted with self-government. We have shown the world that a church without a bishop, and a state without a king is an actual, real, everyday possibility. Look back over the history of the race; where will you find a chapter that precedes us in that achievement? Greece had her republics, but they were the republics of one freeman and ten slaves; and the battle of Marathon was fought by slaves unchained from the doorposts of their masters' houses. Italy had her republics: they were the republics of wealth and skill and family, limited and aristocratic. She had not risen to a sublime faith in man. Holland had her republic, the republic of guilds and landholders, trusting the helm of state to property and education. And all these which at their best held but a million or two within their narrow limits, have gone down in the ocean of time.

A hundred years ago our fathers announced this sublime and, as it seemed then, foolhardy declaration—that God intended all men to be free and equal: all men, without restriction, without qualification, without limit. A hundred years have rolled away since that venturous declaration; and today, with a territory that joins ocean to ocean, with forty millions of people, with two wars behind her, with the sublime achievement of having grappled with the fearful disease that threatened her central life and broken four millions of fetters, the great republic, stronger than ever, launches into the second century of her existence. The history of the world has no such chapter, in its breadth, its depth, its significance, or its bearing on future history.

Well may we claim that this centennial year is the baptism of the human race into a new hope for humanity. Are we not entitled, then, coming with the sheaves of such a harvest in our hands, to say to the world, "Behold the blessing of God on our right faith in the human race!" Well, gentlemen, if that is sober

prose, without one tittle of exaggeration, without one fond conceit borrowed from our kindred with the actors or from our birth in these streets—if that is the sober record—with how much pride, with what a thrill, with what tender and loyal reverence, may we hunt up and cherish, and guard from change or desecration, the spot where this marvelous enterprise began, the roof under which its first councils were held, where the air still trembles and burns with Otis and Sam Adams?

Except the Holy City, is there any more memorable or sacred place on the face of the earth than the cradle of such a change? Athens has her Acropolis, but the Greek can point to no such immediate and distinct results. Her influence passes into the web and woof of history mixed with a score of other elements, and it needs a keen eye to follow it. London has her Palace and Tower, and her St. Stephen's Chapel; but the human race owes her no such memories. France has spots marked by the sublimest devotion; but the pilgrimage and the Mecca of the man who believes and hopes for the human race is not to Paris. It is to the seaboard cities of the great republic. And when the flag was assailed, when the merchant waked up from his gain, the scholar from his studies, and the regiments marched one by one through the streets, which were the pavements that thrilled under their footsteps? What walls did they salute as the regimental flags floated by to Gettysburg and Antietam? These! Our boys carried down to the battlefields the memory of State Street and Faneuil Hall and the Old South Church.

We had a signal prominence in those early days. It was not our merit; it was an accident perhaps. But it was a great accident in our favor that the British Parliament chose Boston as the first and prominent object of its wrath. It was on the men of Boston that Lord North visited his revenge. It was our port that was to be shut, and its commerce annihilated. It was Sam Adams and John Hancock who enjoy the everlasting reward of being the only names excepted from the royal proclamation of forgiveness.

It was only an accident; but it was an accident which, in the stirring history of the most momentous change the world has seen, placed Boston in the van. Naturally, therefore, in our streets and neighborhood came the earliest collision between

England and the Colonies. Here Sam Adams, the ablest and ripest statesman God gave to the epoch, forecast those measures which welded thirteen Colonies into one thunderbolt, and launched it at George III. Here Otis magnetized every boy into a desperate rebel. Here the fit successors of Knox and Hugh Peters consecrated their pulpits to the defense of that doctrine of the freedom and sacredness of man which the state borrowed so directly from the Christian Church. The towers of the North Church rallied the farmers to the Lexington and Concord fights; and these old walls echoed the people's shout, when Adams brought them word that Governor Hutchinson surrendered and withdrew the redcoats. Lingering here still are the echoes of those clashing sabers and jingling spurs that dreamed Warren could be awed to silence. Otis's blood immortalizes State Street, just below where Attucks fell (our first martyr), and just above where zealous patriots made a teapot of the harbor.

It was a petty town, of some twenty thousand inhabitants; but "the rays of royal indignation collected upon it served only to illuminate, and could not consume." Almost every one of its houses had a legend. Every public building hid what was treasonable debate, or bore bullet marks or bloodshed—evidence of royal displeasure. It takes a stout heart to step out of a crowd and risk the chances of support when failure is death. The strongest, proudest, most obstinate race and kingdom on one side, a petty town the assailant—its weapons, ideas; its trust, God and the right; its old-fashioned men patiently arguing with cannon and regiments; blood the seal of the debate, and every stone and wall and roof and doorway witness forever of the angry tyrant and sturdy victim.

Now, gentlemen, man is not a mere animal, to eat, and sleep, and gain, and lay up, and enjoy, and pass away to his fathers. If we had been only that; if the North had been a peddler race, as the South supposed, not willing to risk sixpence for an idea; no Democratic lawyers in yonder Court Street would have shut up their doors, put their keys in their pockets, and asked of Governor Andrew a commission when that piece of bunting was fired upon near Fort Sumter! It was only six feet square of cotton; it was only a few stars and stripes; it was only an insult offered to the

sentiment of twenty millions of people. But it made Democrats and Republicans forget their differences, and a million of men crowd down to the Gulf. It was only a sentiment. But what does it feed on? Ascend one of those lofty buildings above Chicago, and grow weary in counting her crowd of masts and her miles of warehouses; and when you have done it, you remember that the sagacity and the thrift of three hundred thousand men have created that great center of industry, and there comes to your mind, perhaps sooner than anything else, the old lullaby,

> How doth the little busy bee
> Improve each shining hour,
> And gather honey all the day
> From every opening flower.

It is industry; it is thrift; it is comfort; it is wealth. But on Bunker Hill let somebody point out to you the church tower whose lantern told Paul Revere that Middlesex was to be invaded. Search till your eye rests on this tiny spire which trembled once when the mock Indian whoop bade England defiance. There is the elm where Washington first drew his sword. Here Winter Hill, whose cannon ball struck Brattle-Street Church. At your feet the sod is greener for the blood of Warren, which settled it forever that no more laws were to be made for us in London. The thrill you feel is that *sentiment* which, in 1862, made twenty million men, who had wrangled for forty years, close up their angry ranks and carry that insulted bunting "to the Gulf," treading down dissensions and prejudices harder to conquer than Confederate cannon. We cannot afford to close any school which teaches such lessons.

Go ask the Londoner, crowded into small space, what number of pounds laid down on a square foot, what necessities of business, would induce him to pull down the Tower and build a counting-house on its site! Go ask Paris what they will take from some business corporation for the spot where Mirabeau and Danton, or, later down, Lamartine saved the great flag of the tricolor from being drenched in the blood of their fellow citizens! What makes Boston a history? Not so many men, not so much commerce. It is ideas. You might as well plow it with salt, and remove bodily

into the more healthy elevation of Brookline or Dorchester, but for State Street, Faneuil Hall, and the Old South!

What does *Boston* mean? Since 1630, the living fiber running through history which owns that name, means jealousy of power, unfettered speech, keen sense of justice, readiness to champion any good cause. That is the *Boston* Laud suspected, North hated, and the Negro loved. If you destroy the scenes which perpetuate *that* Boston, then rebaptize her Cottonville or Shoetown. Don't belittle these memories; they lie long hid, but only to grow stronger. You mobbed John Brown meetings in 1860, and seemed to forget him in 1861; but the boys in blue, led by that very mob, wearing epaulets, marched from State Street to the Gulf, because "John Brown's soul was marching on." That and the flag—only two memories, two *sentiments*—led the ranks.

My friend has told you that the church has removed its altar; we submit. God is not worshiped in temples builded with men's hands; and when their tower lifted itself in proud beauty to the heavens, and varied stone and rich woods furnished a new shelter for the descendants of Eckley, and Prince, and Sewall, and the others that worshiped here, the consecration that the Puritans gave these walls—to Christ and the Church—was annulled.

But these walls received as real a consecration when Adams and Otis dedicated them to liberty. We do not come here because there went hence to heaven the prayers of Sewall and Prince and the early saints of the colony. We come to save walls that heard and stirred the eloquence of Quincy—that keen blade which so soon wore out the scabbard—determined, "under God, that wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, WE WILL DIE FREEMEN!" These arches will speak to us, as long as they stand, of the sublime and sturdy religious enthusiasm of Adams; of Otis's passionate eloquence and single-hearted devotion; of Warren in his young genius and enthusiasm; of a plain, unaffected, but high-souled people who ventured all for a principle, and to transmit to us, unimpaired, the free lips and self-government which they inherited. Above and around us unseen hands have written, "This is the cradle of Civil Liberty, child of earnest religious faith." I will not say it is a nobler consecration; I will not say that it is a better use. I only say we come

here to save what our fathers consecrated to the memories of the most successful struggle the race has ever made for the liberties of man. You spend half a million for a schoolhouse. What school so eloquent to educate citizens as these walls? Napoleon turned his Simplon Road aside to save a tree Caesar had once mentioned. Won't you turn a street or spare a quarter of an acre to remind boys what sort of men their fathers were? Think twice before you touch these walls. We are only the world's trustees. The Old South no more belongs to us than Luther's, or Hampden's, or Brutus's name does to Germany, England, or Rome. Each and all are held in trust as torchlight guides and inspiration for any man struggling for justice, and ready to die for the truth.

I went to Chicago more than twenty years ago; and they showed me the log house, thirty feet square and twenty feet high, in which the first officer of the United States, the first white man, lived, where now are half a million of human beings. There it nestled amid spacious inns, costly warehouses, and luxurious homes. I said to them, "Why not cover it with plate glass, and let it stand there forever, the cradle of the great city of the lakes?" But I could not wake any sentiment in that quarter million of traders; and the ancestral cabin which, to an anointed eye, measured the vast space between that 1816 and 1856, with its wealth and splendor, passed away. Then I came back here. That same week I found at my door a slaveholder from Arkansas. Singularly enough, in those bitter years, he trusted himself to me as a guide through the historic scenes of Boston. But it shows you how true it is that a prophet has no honor in his own household; how his reputation grows the farther off you get! Well, the first place I took him to was the house of John Hancock. We ascended those steps. I had learned from his talk that, on that frontier where he was born, he had never seen a building older than twenty-five years. As we stood under that balcony, which some of you may remember, he turned to me and said, "Is it actually true that the man who signed the Declaration of Independence stood on this flagstone, and lifted that latch?" I said, "Yes, sir; and above you, his body lay in state for some six or eight days." The man sat down on the flagstone, wholly un-

nerved, his face pale with emotion. Said he, "You must excuse me; but I never felt as I feel today." That was Boston revealing to an everyday life the patriotism and nobleness smothered by petty cares. He came to our streets to wake that throb in his nature; he grew a better man and a more chivalrous citizen when that thrill answered to the memory of the first signer of the Declaration.

Gentlemen, these walls are the college for such training. The saving of this landmark is the best monument you can erect to the men of the Revolution. You spend forty thousand dollars here, and twenty thousand dollars there, to put up a statue of some old hero; you want your son to gaze on the nearest approach to the features of those

> dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
> Our spirits from their urns.

But what is a statue of Cicero compared to standing where your voice echoes from pillar and wall that actually heard his philippics! How much better than a picture of John Brown is the sight of that Blue Ridge which filled his eye, when, riding to the scaffold, he said calmly to his jailer, "This is a beautiful country; I never noticed it before." Destroy every portrait of Luther, if you must, but save that terrible chamber where he fought with the Devil, and translated the Bible. Scholars have grown old and blind, striving to put their hands on the very spot where bold men spoke, or brave men died; shall we tear in pieces the roof that actually trembled to the words which made us a nation? It is impossible not to believe, if the spirits above us are permitted to know what passes in this terrestrial sphere, that Adams and Warren and Otis are today bending over us, asking that the scene of their immortal labors shall not be desecrated or blotted from the sight of men.

Consecrate it again, in the worship and memory of a people! Consecrate it in order that, if another rebellion breaks out against the flag, if our young men need once more to have their hearts quickened to the sublime significance of the republic which protects them, if once more we must rally flags and marshal ranks for the protection of liberty, the young men shall be able to

look up to Faneuil Hall and the Old State House and these walls, as a quickening inspiration, before they leave these streets to go down and show themselves worthy of their fathers. Let these walls stand, if only to remind us that, in those days, Adams and Otis, advocates of the newest and extremest liberty, found their sturdiest allies in the pulpit; that our Revolution was so much a crusade that the Church led the van.

Summon it again, ye venerable walls, to its true place in the world's toil for good! Give us Mayhews and Coopers again; and let the children of the Pilgrims show that religious conviction, veneration for "the great of old," and a stern purpose that our flag shall everywhere and always mean justice, are a threefold cord holding this nation together, never to be broken. We have a great future before us—how grand, human forecast cannot measure—yes, a great future endangered by many and grave perils. Our way out of these, faith believes in, but mortal eye cannot see. It is wisdom to summon every ally, to save every possible help. Educate the people to noble purpose. Lift them to the level of the highest motive. Enforce by every possible appeal the influence of the finest elements of our nature. Let the great ideas—self-respect, freedom, justice, self-sacrifice—help each man to tread the body under his feet. This worship of great memories, noble deeds, sacred places—the poetry of history—is one of the keenest ripeners of such elements. Seize greedily on every chance to save and emphasize these.

Give me a people freshly and tenderly alive to such influences, and I will laugh at money rings or demagogues armed with sensual temptations. Men marvelled at the uprising which hurled slavery to the dust. It was young men who dreamed dreams over patriot graves—enthusiasts wrapped in memories! Marble, gold, and granite are not *real;* the only actual reality is an idea.

Gentlemen, I remember—Mr. Chairman, you will remember, also—that some six months ago the mayor and aldermen debated how they should use some eighteen or twenty thousand dollars left them by Jonathan Phillips to ornament the streets of Boston; and then the city government decided—and decided very properly —that they could do no better with that money than place before the people a statue of the great mayor, Josiah Quincy, to whom

this city owes so much. It was a very worthy vote under those circumstances; but if the great mayor were living today, he would be here with the Massachusetts—yes, he would be here, Mr. Chairman—with the Massachusetts Historical Society in his right hand, and the Mechanics Association in the other, and he would protest against the use of a dollar of that money for his personal honor until it had been first used to save this immortal legacy. I wish that I had a voice in that aldermanic corps; I would propose, with no discredit to the great mayor—let no one tear a leaf from his well-earned laurels! but it was the mechanics of Boston that threw tea into the dock; it was the mechanics of Boston that held up the hands of Sam Adams; it was the mechanics of Boston, Paul Revere one of them, that made the Green Dragon immortal —and I would take that eighteen thousand dollars and add fifty thousand more, and let the city preserve this building as a Mechanics' Exchange for all time. The merchants have their gilded room, fit gathering place for consultations; but the men that carried us through the Revolution—caulkers! why, some men think we borrowed *caucus* from their name!—the men that carried us through the Revolution were the mechanics of Boston. Where do they gather today? On the sidewalks and pavements of Court Street, in the open air! We owe them a debt, in memory of what this grand movement, in its cradle, owed to them. I would ally the Green Dragon Tavern and the Sons of Liberty with the Old South, the grandsons, and great-grandsons, and representatives of the men who made the bulk of that meeting before which Hutchinson quailed, and Colonel Dalrymple put on his hat and left the Council Chamber.

It was the message of the mechanics of Boston that Sam Adams carried to the governor and to Congress. They sent him to Salem and Philadelphia; they lifted and held him up till even purblind George III could distinguish his ablest opposer, and learned to hate with discrimination.

Shelter them under this roof; consecrate it in its original form to a grand public use for the common run of the people—the bone and muscle. It will be the normal school of politics. It will be the best civil-service reform agency that the Republican Party can adopt and use today.

The influence of these old walls will prevent men, if anything can, from becoming the tools of corruption or tyranny. "Recall every day one good thought, read one fine line," says the German Shakespeare. Yes; let every man's daily walk catch one ray of golden light, and his pulse throb once each day nobly, as he passes these walls! No gold, no greed can canker the heart of such a people. Once in their hands, neither need, greed, nor the clamor for wider streets will ever desecrate what Adams and Warren and Otis made sacred to the liberties of man!

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Wendell Phillips ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM ★

Edited by LOUIS FILLER

Wendell Phillips, along with William Lloyd Garrison, was a leader of the nineteenth-century Abolitionist movement. Unlike many Abolitionists Phillips did not cease his agitation with the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation or the passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. He continued to battle for civil rights for the Negro and against wage slavery of both black and white. He was also one of the earliest crusaders for women's rights. Many of Phillips' ideas are as pertinent now as the day he uttered them.

The eighteen selections in this volume have been chosen for their eloquence and for their relevance to today's civil rights movement. They have been reprinted from **Speeches, Lectures and Letters, Volume I** and **Volume II,** published in 1864 and 1891 respectively, both of which have been long out of print.

Louis Filler is Professor of American Civilization at Antioch College and is the author of **Crusade Against Slavery,** among numerous books and essays on American history.

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